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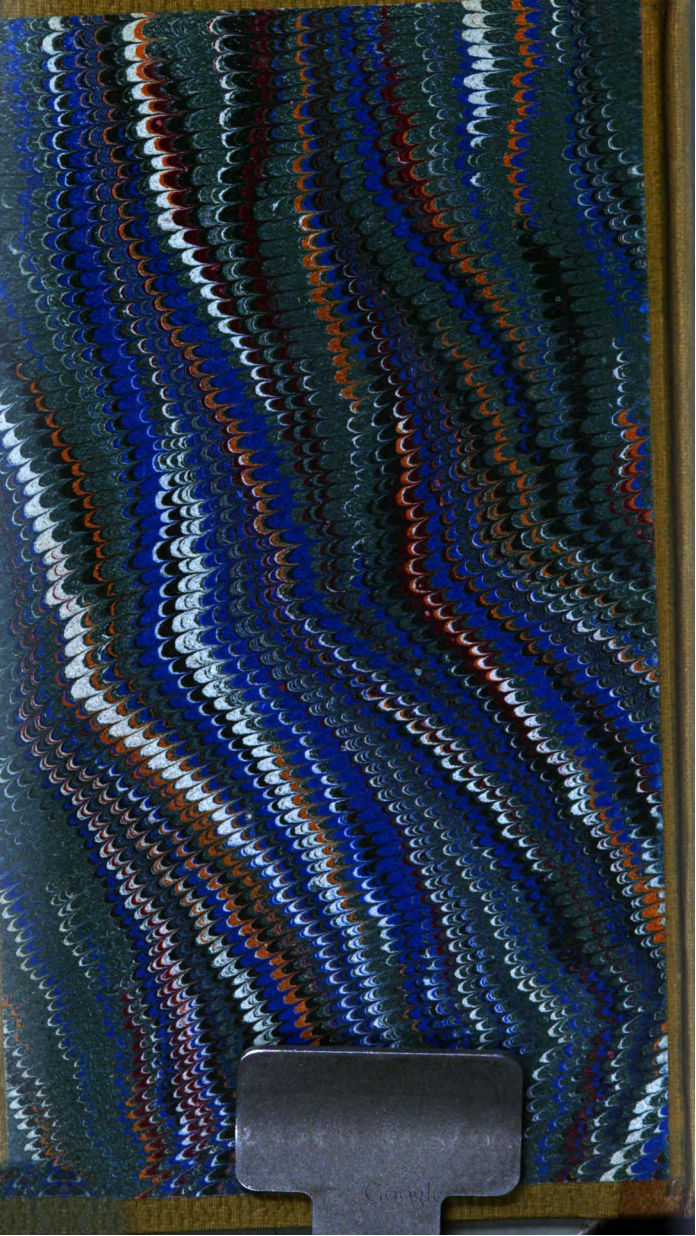

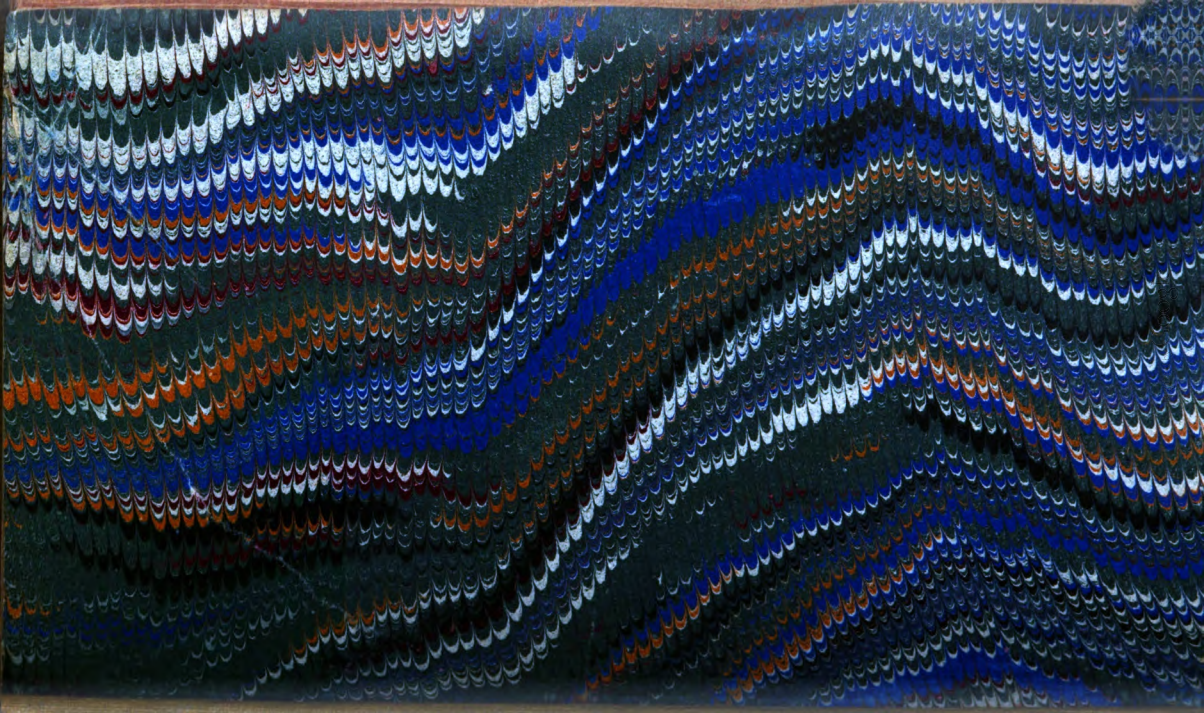

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Frontispiece

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LETTERS

OF

ABELARD

AND

HELOISE.

To which is prefix'd a Particular Account of their

Lives, Amours, *and* Misfortunes.

By the late JOHN HUGHES, Esq.

To which is now first added,

The POEM of ELOISA to ABELARD.

By Mr. *POPE.*

The TENTH EDITION, Ornamented with CUTS.

LONDON:

Printed for W. JOHNSTON, B. LAW, T. LOWNDS, and T. CASLON.

MDCCLXV.

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PREFACE.

IT is very surprizing that the Letters of Abelard *and* Heloise *have not sooner appeared in* English, *since it is generally allowed by all who have seen them in other Languages that they are written with the greatest Passion of any in this kind which are extant. And it is certain that the* Letters from a Nun to a Cavalier, *which have so long been known and admired among us, are in all Respects inferior to them. Whatever those were, these are known to be genuine Pieces, occasioned by an Amour which had very extraordinary Consequences, and made a great Noise at the Time when it happened, being between two of the most distinguished Persons of that Age.*

These Letters therefore being truly written by the Persons themselves, whose Names they bear, and who were both remarkable for their Genius and Learning, as well as by a most extravagant Passion for each other, are every where full of Sentiments of the Heart, (which are not to be imitated in a feigned Story) and Touches of Nature, much more moving than any which could flow from the Pen of a Writer of Novels, or enter into the Imagination of any who had not felt the like Emotions and Distresses.

They were originally written in Latin, *and are extant in a Collection of the Works of* Abelard,

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lard, *printed at* Paris *in the Year* 1616. *With what Elegance and Beauty of Style they were written in that Language, will sufficiently appear to the learned Reader, even by those few Citations which are set at the Bottom of the Page in some Places of the following History. But the Book here mentioned consisting chiefly of School Divinity, and of the Learning of those Times, and therefore being rarely to be met with but in publick Libraries, and in the Hands of some learned Men, the Letters of* Abelard *and* Heloise *are much more known by a Translation, or rather Paraphrase of them in* French, *first published at the* Hague *in* 1693, *and which afterwards received several other more compleat Editions. This Translation is much applauded, but who was the Author of it is not certainly known. Monsieur* Bayle *says, he had been informed it was done by a Woman; and perhaps he thought no one besides could have entered so thoroughly into the Passion and Tenderness of such Writings, for which that Sex seems to have a more natural Disposition than the other. This may be judged by the Letters themselves, among which those of* Heloise *are the most tender and moving, and the Master seems in this Particular to have been excelled by the Scholar.*

In some of the later Editions in French, *there has been prefixed to the Letters an Historical Account of* Abelard *and* Heloise; *this is chiefly extracted from the Preface of the Editor of* Abelard's *Works in Latin, and from the Critical Dictionary of Monsieur* Bayle *, who has put together,*

* *Vid. Artic.* Abelard, Heloise, Foulques *and* Paraclet.

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together, under several Articles, all the Particulars he was able to collect concerning these two famous Persons: And though the first Letter of Abelard *to* Philintus, *in which he relates his own Story, may seem to have rendered this Account in part unnecessary; yet the Reader will not be displeased to see the Thread of the Relation entire, and continued to the Death of the Persons whose Misfortunes had made their Lives so very remarkable.*

It is indeed impossible to be unmoved at the surprizing and multiplied Afflictions and Persecutions which befel a Man of Abelard's *fine Genius, when we see them so feelingly described by his own Hand. Many of these were owing to the Malice of such as were his Enemies on the Account of his superior Learning and Merit; yet the great Calamities of his Life took their Rise from his unhappy Indulgence of a criminal Passion, and giving himself a Loose to unwarrantable Pleasures. After this he was perpetually involved in Sorrow and Distress, and in vain sought for Ease and Quiet in a Monastick Life. The Letters between him and his beloved* Heloise *were not written till long after their Marriage and Separation, and when each of them was dedicated to a Life of Religion. Accordingly we find in them surprizing Mixtures of Devotion and Tenderness, of Penitence and remaining Frailty, and a lively Picture of Human Nature in its Contrarieties of Passion and Reason, its Infirmities and its Sufferings.*

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THE HISTORY OF ABELARD and HELOISE.

PETER *ABELARD* was born in the Village of *Palais*, in *Britany*. He lived in the twelfth Century, in the Reigns of *Lewis the Groſs*, and *Lewis the Young*. His Father's Name was *Beranger*, a Gentleman of a conſiderable and wealthy Family. He took Care to give his Children a liberal and pious Education; eſpecially his eldeſt Son *Peter*, on whom he endeavoured to beſtow all poſſible Improvements, becauſe there appeared in him an extraordinary Vivacity of Wit, joined with Sweetneſs of Temper, and all imaginable Preſages of a great Man.

When he had made ſome Advancement in Learning, he grew ſo fond of his Books, that,

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leſt Affairs of the World might interrupt his Proficiency in them, he quitted his Birth-right to his younger Brothers, and applied himſelf entirely to the Studies of Philoſophy and Divinity.

Of all the Sciences to which he applied himſelf, that which pleaſed him moſt, and in which he made the greateſt Progreſs, was Logick. He had a very ſubtle Wit, and was inceſſantly whetting it by Diſputes, out of a reſtleſs Ambition to be a Maſter of his Weapons. So that in a ſhort time he gained the Reputation of the greateſt Philoſopher of his Age; and has always been eſteemed the Founder of what we call the *Learning of the Schoolmen.*

He finiſhed his Studies at *Paris*, where Learning was then in a flouriſhing Condition. In this City he found that famous Profeſſor of Philoſophy, *William des Champeaux*, and ſoon became his favourite Scholar; but this did not laſt long. The Profeſſor was ſo hard put to it, to anſwer the ſubtle Objections of his new Scholar, that he grew uneaſy with him. The School ſoon run into Parties. The Senior Scholars, tranſported with Envy againſt *Abelard*, ſeconded their Maſter's Reſentment. All this ſerved only to increaſe the young Man's Preſumption, who now thought himſelf ſufficiently qualified to ſet up a School of his own. For this purpoſe he choſe an advantageous Place, which was the Town of *Melun*, ten Leagues from *Paris*, where the *French* Court reſided at that Time. *Champeaux* did all that he could to hinder the erecting of this School; but

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but some of the great Courtiers being his Enemies, the Opposition he made to it only promoted the Design of his Rival.

The Reputation of this new Professor made a marvellous Progress, and eclipsed that of *Champeaux*. These Successes swelled *Abelard* so much, that he removed his School to *Corbeil*, in order to engage his Enemy the closer in more frequent Disputations. But his excessive Application to Study brought upon him a long and dangerous Sickness, which constrained him to return to his Native Air.

After he had spent two Years in his own Country, he made a second Adventure to *Paris*, where he found that his old Antagonist *Champeaux* had resigned his Chair to another, and was retired into a Convent of *Canons Regular*, among whom he continued his Lectures. *Abelard* attacked him with such Fury, that he quickly forced him to renounce his Tenets. Whereupon the poor Monk became so despicable, and his Antagonist in such great Esteem, that no body went to the Lectures of *Champeaux*, and the very Man who succeeded him in his Professorship, listed under *Abelard*, and became his Scholar.

He was scarce fixed in his Chair, before he found himself exposed more than ever to the strokes of the most cruel Envy. Endeavours were used to do him ill Offices by all those who were any ways disaffected to him; another Professor was put into his Place who had thought it his Duty to submit to *Abelard*; in short, so many Enemies were raised against

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him, that he was forced to retreat from *Paris* to *Melun*, and there revive his Logick Lectures. But this held not long; for hearing that *Champeaux* with all his Infantry was retired into a Country Village, he came and posted himself on Mount St. *Genevieve*, where he erected a new School, like a kind of Battery against him whom *Champeaux* had left to teach at *Paris*.

Champeaux understanding that his Substitute was thus besieged in his School, brought the *Regular Canons* back again to their Monastery. But this, instead of relieving his Friend, caused all his Scholars to desert him. At which the poor Philosopher was so mortified, that he followed the Example of his Patron *Champeaux*, and turned Monk too.

The Dispute now lay wholly between *Abelard* and *Champeaux*, who renewed it with great Warmth on both Sides; but the Senior had not the best on't. While it was depending, *Abelard* was obliged to visit his Father and Mother, who, according to the Fashion of those Times, had resolved to forsake the World, and retire into Convents, in order to devote themselves more seriously to the Care of their Salvation.

Having assisted at the Admission of his Parents into their respective Monasteries, and received their Blessing, he returned to *Paris*, where, during his Absence, his Rival had been promoted to the Bishoprick of *Chalons*. And now being in a Condition to quit his School without any Suspicion of flying from his Enemy,

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my, he resolved to apply himself wholly to Divinity.

To this end he removed to *Laon*, where one *Anselm* read Divinity-Lectures with good Reputation. But *Abelard* was so little satisfied with the old Man's Abilities, who, as he says, had a very mean Genius, and a great Fluency of Words without Sense, that he took a Resolution for the future, to hear no other Master than the Holy Scriptures. A good Resolution! If a Man take the Spirit of God for his Guide, and be more concerned to distinguish Truth from Falshood, than to confirm himself in those Principles into which his own Fancy or Complexion, or the Prejudices of his Birth and Education, have insensibly led him.

Abelard, together with the Holy Scriptures, read the ancient Fathers and Doctors of the Church; in which he spent whole Days and Nights, and profited so well, that instead of returning to *Anselm*'s Lectures, he took up the same Employment, and began to explain the Prophet *Ezekiel* to some of his Fellow-Pupils; He performed this Part so agreeably, and in so easy a method, that he soon got a Crowd of Auditors.

The jealous *Anselm* could not bear this; he quickly found means to get the new Lecturer silenced. Upon this *Abelard* removed to *Paris* once more, where he proceeded with his publick Exposition on *Ezekiel*, and soon acquired the same Reputation for his Divinity, he had before gained for his Philosophy. His Eloquence and Learning procured him an incre-

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dible Number of Scholars from all Parts; ſo that if he had minded ſaving of Money, he might have grown rich with Eaſe in a ſhort time. And happy had it been for him, if among all the Enemies his Learning expoſed him to, he had guarded his Heart againſt the Charms of Love. But alas! the greateſt Doctors are not always the wiſeſt Men; as appears from Examples in every Age; but from none more remarkable than that of this Learned Man, whoſe Story I am now going to tell you.

Abelard, beſides his uncommon Merit as a Scholar, had all the Accompliſhments of a Gentleman. He had a Greatneſs of Soul which nothing could ſhock, his Paſſions were Delicate, his Judgment Solid, and Taſte Exquiſite. He was of a graceful Perſon, and carried himſelf with the Air of a Man of Quality. His Converſation was Sweet, Complaiſant, Eaſy, and Gentleman-like. It ſeemed as tho' Nature had deſigned him for a more elevated Employment than that of teaching the Sciences. He looked upon Riches and Grandeur with Contempt, and had no higher Ambition than to make his Name famous among Learned Men, and to be reputed the greateſt Doctor of his Age: but he had human Frailty, and all his Philoſophy could not guard him from the Attacks of Love. For ſome Time indeed he had defended himſelf againſt this Paſſion pretty well, when the Temptation was but ſlight; but upon a more intimate Familiarity with agreeable Objects, he found his Reaſon

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Reaſon fail him: Yet, in reſpect to his Wiſdom, he thought of Compounding the Matter, and reſolved at firſt, that Love and Philoſophy ſhould dwell together in the ſame Breaſt. He intended only to let out his Heart to the former, and that but for a little while; never conſidering that Love is a great Ruiner of Projects; and that when it has one got a ſhare in a Heart, it is eaſy to poſſeſs itſelf of the whole.

He was now in the Seven or Eight and Twentieth Year of his Age, when he thought himſelf compleatly happy in all Reſpects, excepting that he wanted a Miſtreſs. He conſidered therefore of making a Choice, but ſuch a one as might be moſt ſuitable to his Notions, and the Deſign he had of paſſing agreeably thoſe Hours he did not employ in his Study. He had ſeveral Ladies in his Eye, to whom, as he ſays in one of his Letters, he could eaſily have recommended himſelf. For you muſt underſtand, that beſides his Qualifications mentioned before, he had a Vein of Poetry, and made abundance of little eaſy Songs, which he would ſing with all the Advantage of a gallant Air and pleaſant Voice. But tho' he was cut out for a Lover, he was not over-haſty in determining his Choice. He was not of a Humour to be pleaſed with the Wanton or Forward; he ſcorned eaſy Pleaſures, and ſought to encounter with Difficulties and Impediments, that he might conquer with the greater Glory. In ſhort, he had not yet ſeen the Woman he was to Love.

Not far from the Place where *Abelard* read

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his Lectures lived one Doctor *Fulbert*, a Canon of the Church of *Notre-Dame*. This Canon had a Niece named *Heloiſe* in his Houſe, whom he educated with great Care and Affection. Some Writers ſay *, that ſhe was the good Man's natural Daughter; but that, to prevent a publick Scandal, he gave out that ſhe was his Niece, by his Siſter, who upon her Death-bed had charged him with her Education. But tho' it was well known in thoſe Times, as well as ſince, that the Niece of an Eccleſiaſtick is ſometimes more nearly related to him, yet of this Damſel's Birth and Parentage we have nothing very certain. There is reaſon to think, from one of her Letters to *Abelard*, that ſhe came of a mean Family; for ſhe owns that great Honour was done to her Side by this Alliance, and that he had married much below himſelf. So that what *Francis d'Amboiſe* ſays, that ſhe was of the Name and Family of *Montmorency*, has no manner of Foundation. It is very probable ſhe was really and truly *Fulbert*'s Niece, as he affirmed her to be. Whatever ſhe was for Birth, ſhe was a very engaging Woman; and if ſhe was not a perfect Beauty, ſhe appeared ſuch at leaſt in *Abelard*'s Eyes. Her Perſon was well proportioned, her Features regular, her Eyes ſparkling, her Lips Vermillion and well-formed, her Complexion animated, her Air fine, and her Aſpect ſweet and agreeable. She had a ſurprizing Quickneſs of

* *Papyr. Maſſo, Annal. l. 3. Joannes Canonicus Pariſinus, Heloyſian naturalem filiam habebat præſtanti ingenio, formaque.*

Wit,

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Wit, an incredible Memory, and a conſiderable ſhare of Learning, joined with Humility; and all theſe Accompliſhments were attended with ſomething ſo graceful and moving, that it was impoſſible for thoſe who kept her Company not to be in Love with her.

As ſoon as *Abelard* had ſeen her and converſed with her, the Charms of her Wit and Beauty made ſuch an Impreſſion upon his Heart, that he preſently conceived a moſt violent Paſſion for her, and reſolved to make it his whole Endeavour to win her Affections. And now he that formerly quitted his Patrimony to purſue his Studies, laid aſide all other Engagements to attend his new Paſſion.

In vain did Philoſophy and Reaſon importune him to return; he was deaf to their Call, and thought of nothing but how to enjoy the Sight and Company of his dear *Heloiſe*. And he ſoon met with the luckieſt Opportunity in the World. *Fulbert*, who had the greateſt Affection imaginable for his Niece, finding her to have a good ſhare of natural Wit, and a particular Genius for Learning, thought himſelf obliged to improve the Talents which Nature had ſo liberally beſtowed on her. He had already put her to learn ſeveral Languages, which ſhe quickly came to underſtand ſo well, that her Fame began to ſpread itſelf abroad, and the Wit and Learning of *Heloiſe* was every where diſcourſed of. And tho' her Uncle for his own ſhare was no great Scholar, he was very ſollicitous that his Niece ſhould have all poſſible Improvements. He was willing therefore ſhe

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ſhould have Maſters to inſtruct her in what ſhe had a mind to Learn, but he loved his Money; and this kept him from providing for her Education ſo well as ſhe deſired.

Abelard, how knew *Heloiſe*'s Inclinations, and the Temper of her Uncle, thought this an Opportunity favourable to his Deſign. He was already well acquainted with *Fulbert*, as being his Brother Canon in the ſame Church; and he obſerved how fond the other was of his Friendſhip, and what an Honour he eſteemed it to be intimate with a Perſon of his Reputation. He therefore told him one Day in Familiarity, that he was at a loſs for ſome Houſe to board in; and if you could find Room for me, ſaid he, in yours, I leave it to you to name the Terms.

The good Man immediately conſidering, that by this Means he ſhould provide an able Maſter for his Niece, who inſtead of taking Money of him, offered to pay him well for his Board, embraced his Propoſal with all the Joy imaginable, gave him a thouſand Careſſes, and deſired he would conſider him for the future as one ambitious of the ſtricteſt Friendſhip with him.

What an unſpeakable Joy was this to the amorous *Abelard*! to conſider that he was going to live with her, who was the only Object of his Deſires! that he ſhould have the Opportunity of ſeeing and converſing with her every Day, and of acquainting her with his Paſſion! However he concealed his Joy at preſent, leſt he ſhould make his Intentions ſuſpected. We told

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told you before how liberal Nature had been to our Lover, in making his Perſon ever way agreeable; ſo that he flattered himſelf that it was almoſt impoſſible * that any Woman ſhould reject his Addreſſes. Perhaps he was miſtaken: the Sex has Variety of Humours. However, conſider him as a Philoſopher who had hitherto lived in a ſtrict Chaſtity †, he certainly reaſoned well in the Buſineſs of Love, when he concluded that *Heloiſe* would be an eaſier Conqueſt to him than others, becauſe her Learning gave him an Opportunity of eſtabliſhing a Correſpondence by Letters, in which he might diſcover his Paſſion with greater Freedom, than he durſt preſume to uſe in Converſation.

Some time after the Canon had taken *Abelard* into his Houſe, as they were diſcourſing one Day about Things ſomewhat above *Fulbert*'s Capacity, the latter turned the Diſcourſe inſenſibly to the good Qualities of his Niece; he informed *Abelard* of the Excellency of her Wit, and how ſtrong a Propenſity ſhe had to improve in Learning; and withal made it his earneſt Requeſt, that he would take the Pains to inſtruct her. *Abelard* pretended to be ſurprized at a Propoſal of this Nature. He told him that Learning was not the proper Buſineſs of

* *Tanti quippe tunc nominis eram et juventutis et formæ gratia præeminebam, ut quamcunque fœminarum noſtro dignarer amore nullam vererer repulſam.* Epiſt. Abel. p. 10.

† *Fræna libidini cæpi laxare, qui antea viveram continentiſſime.* Ibid.

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of Women; that such Inclinations in them had more of Humour or Curiosity, than a solid Desire of Knowledge; and could hardly pass, among either the Learned or Ignorant, without drawing upon them the Imputation of Conceit and Affectation. *Fulbert* answer'd, that this was very true of Women, of common Capacities; but he hop'd when he had discoursed with his Niece, and found what Progress she had made already, and what a Capacity she had for Learning, he would be of another Opinion. *Abelard* assured him, he was ready to do all he could for her Improvement, and if she was not like other Women, who hate to learn any thing beyond their Needle, he would spare no pains to make *Heloise* answer the Hopes which her Uncle had conceived of her.

The Canon was transported with the Civility of the young Doctor; he returned him Thanks, and protested he could not do him a more acceptable Service than to assist his Niece in her Endeavours to learn; he therefore entreated him once more, to set apart some of his Time, which he did not employ in publick, for this purpose: And (as if he had known his design'd Intrigue, and was willing to promote it) he committed her entirely to his Care, and begg'd of him to treat her with the Authority of a Master, not only to chide her, but even to correct her whenever she was guilty of any Neglect or Disobedience to his Commands.

Fulbert, in this, shew'd a Simplicity without

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out Example; but the Affection which he had for his Niece was so blind, and *Abelard* had so well established his Reputation for Wisdom, that the Uncle never scrupled in the least to trust them together, and thought he had all the Security in the World for their Virtue. *Abelard*, you may be sure, made use of the Freedom which was given him. He saw his beautiful Creature every Hour, he set her Lessons every Day, and was extremely pleased to see what Proficiency she made. *Heloise*, for her Part, was so taken with her Master, that she liked nothing so well as what she learn'd from him; and the Master was charmed with that Quickness of Apprehension, with which his Scholar learn'd the most difficult Lessons. But he did not intend to stop here. He knew so well how to insinuate into the Affections of this young Person, he gave her such plain Intimations of what was in his Heart, and spoke so agreeably of the Passion, which he had conceived for her, that he had the Satisfaction of seeing himself well understood. It is no difficult matter to make a Girl of Eighteen in Love. And *Abelard*, having so much Wit and agreeable Humour, must needs make a greater Progress in her Affections, than she did in the Lessons which he taught her. So that in a short time she fell so much in Love with him, that she could deny him nothing.

Fulbert had a Country House at *Corbeil*, to which the Lovers often resorted, under Pretence of applying themselves more closely to their Studies: There they conversed freely, and

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and gave themſelves up entirely to the Pleaſures of a mutual Paſſion. They took advantage of that Privacy which Study and Contemplation require, without ſubjecting themſelves to the Cenſure of thoſe who obſerv'd it.

In this Retirement, *Abelard* owns that more of his Time was employed in ſoft Careſſes than in Lectures of Philoſophy. Sometimes he pretended to uſe the Severity of a Maſter; and the better to deceive ſuch as might be Spies upon them, he exclaim'd againſt *Heloiſe*, and reproached her for her Negligence. But how different were his Menaces from thoſe which are inſpir'd by Anger!

Never did two Lovers give a greater Looſe to their Delights than did theſe two for five or ſix Months; they lived in all the Endearments which could enter the Heart of young Beginners. This is *Abelard*'s own Account of the Matter. He compares himſelf to ſuch as have been long kept in a ſtarving Condition, and at laſt are brought to a Feaſt. A grave and ſtudious Man exceeds a *Debauché* in his Enjoyments of a Woman whom he loves, and of whom he is paſſionately beloved.

Abelard being thus enchanted with the Careſſes of his Miſtreſs, neglected all his ſerious and important Affairs. His Performances in publick were wretched. His Scholars perceived it, and ſoon gueſs'd the Reaſon. His Head was turn'd to nothing but amorous Verſes. His School was his Averſion, and he ſpent as little Time in it as he could. As for his Lectures, they were commonly the old ones

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ones ſerved up again: The Night was wholly loſt from his Studies; and his Leiſure was employ'd in writing Songs, which were diſpers'd and ſung in divers Provinces of *France* many Years after. In ſhort, our Lovers, who were in their own Opinion the happieſt Pair in the World, kept ſo little guard that their Amours were every where talk'd of, and all the World ſaw plainly that the Sciences were not always the Subject of their Converſation. Only honeſt *Fulbert*, under whoſe Noſe all this was done, was the laſt Man that heard any thing of it: He wanted Eyes to ſee that which was viſible to all the World; and if any body went about to tell him of it, he was prepoſſeſt with ſo good an Opinion of his Niece and her Maſter, that he would believe nothing againſt them.

But at laſt ſo many Diſcoveries were daily made to him, that he could not help believing ſomething; he therefore reſolved to ſeparate them, and by that means prevent the ill Conſequences of their too great Familiarity: however he thought it beſt to convict them himſelf, before he proceeded further; and therefore watched them ſo cloſely, that he had one Day an Opportunity of receiving ocular Satisfaction that the Reports he had heard were true. In ſhort, he ſurpriz'd them together. And though he was naturally cholerick, yet he appear'd ſo moderate on this occaſion as to leave them under diſmal Apprehenſions of ſomething worſe to come after. The Reſult was, that they muſt be parted.

Who

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Who can expreſs the Torment our Lovers felt upon this Separation! however it ſerved only to unite their Hearts more firmly; they were but the more eager to ſee one another. Difficulties increas'd their Deſires, and put them upon any Attempts, without regarding what might be the Conſequence. *Abelard*, finding it impoſſible to live without his dear *Heloiſe*, endeavour'd to ſettle a Correſpondence with her by her Maid *Agaton*, who was a handſome brown Girl, well-ſhap'd, and likely enough to have pleas'd a Man who was not otherwiſe engaged. But what a Surprize was it to our Doctor, to find this Girl refuſe his Money, and in recompence of the Services ſhe was to do him with her Miſtreſs, demanded no leſs a Reward than his Heart, and making him at once a plain Declaration of Love! *Abelard*, who could love none but *Heloiſe*, turn'd from her abruptly, without anſwering a Word. But a rejected Woman is a dangerous Creature. *Agaton* knew well how to revenge the Affront put upon her, and fail'd not to acquaint *Fulbert* with *Abelard*'s Offers to her, without ſaying a word how ſhe had been diſobliged. *Fulbert* thought it was time to look about him. He thanked the Maid for her Care, and enter'd into Meaſures with her, how to keep *Abelard* from viſiting his Niece.

The Doctor was now more perplex'd than ever; he had no way left but to apply himſelf to *Heloiſe*'s Singing-Maſter: and the Gold which the Maid refuſed, prevailed with him.

By

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By this means *Abelard* convey'd a Letter to *Heloiſe:* in which he acquainted her that he intended to come and ſee her at Night, and that the Way he had contrived was over the Garden-wall by a Ladder of Cords. This Project ſucceeded, and brought them together. After the firſt Tranſports of this ſhort Interview, *Heloiſe*, who had found ſome more than ordinary Symptoms within her, acquainted her Lover with it. She had inform'd him of it before by a Letter; and now having this Opportunity to conſult about it, they agreed that ſhe ſhould go to a Siſter of his in *Britany*, at whoſe Houſe ſhe might be privately brought to Bed. But before they parted, he endeavour'd to comfort her and make her eaſy in this Diſtreſs, by giving her Aſſurances of Marriage. When *Heloiſe* heard this Propoſal ſhe perremporily rejected it, and gave ſuch Reaſons * for her Refuſal, as left *Abelard* in the greateſt Aſtoniſhment.

Indeed a Refuſal of this Nature is ſo extraordinary a thing, that perhaps another Inſtance of it is not to be found in Hiſtory. I perſuade myſelf therefore, that I ſhall not offend my Reader, if I make ſome few Remarks upon it. It often happens that the Paſſion of Love ſtifles or over-rules the Rebukes of Conſcience; but it is unuſual for it to extinguiſh the Senſibility of Honour. I don't ſpeak of Perſons of a mean Birth and no Education; but for others, all young Women, I ſuppoſe, that

* *See* Abelard's *Letter to* Filintus, *and* Heloiſe's *firſt Letter to* Abelard.

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that engage in Love Intrigues, flatter themſelves with one of theſe Views; either they hope they ſhall not prove with Child, or they ſhall conceal it from the World, or they ſhall get themſelves married. As for ſuch as reſolve to deſtroy the Fruit of their Amours, there are but few ſo void of all natural Affection, as to be capable of this greateſt Degree of Barbarity. However this ſhews plainly that if Love tyrannizes ſometimes, it is ſuch a Tyrant as leaves Honour in Poſſeſſion of its Rights. But *Heloiſe* had a Paſſion ſo ſtrong, that ſhe was not at all concerned for her Honour or Reputation. She was overjoy'd to find herſelf with Child, and yet ſhe did her utmoſt not to be married. Never ſure was ſo odd an Example, as theſe two things made, when put together. The firſt was very extraordinary; and how many young Women in the World would rather be married to a diſagreeable Huſband, than live in a State of Reproach? They know the Remedy is bad enough, and will coſt them dear; but what ſignifies that, ſo long as the Name of Huſband hides the Flaws made in their Honour? But as for *Heloiſe*, ſhe was not ſo nice in this Point. An Exceſs of Paſſion never heard of before, made her chuſe to be *Abelard*'s Miſtreſs rather than his Wife. We ſhall ſee in the Courſe of this Hiſtory, how firm ſhe was in this Reſolution, with what Arguments ſhe ſupported it, and how earneſtly ſhe perſuaded her Gallant to be of the ſame Mind.

Abelard, who was willing to loſe no Time, leſt

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leſt his dear *Helioſe* ſhould fall into her Uncle's Hands, diſguiſed her in the Habit of a Nun, and ſent her away with the greateſt Diſpatch, hoping, that after ſhe was brought to Bed, he ſhould have more leiſure to perſuade her to Marriage, by which they might ſkreen themſelves from the Reproach which muſt otherwiſe come upon them, as ſoon as the Buſineſs ſhould be publickly known.

As ſoon as *Heloiſe* was ſet forward on her Journey, *Abelard* reſolv'd to make *Fulbert* a Viſit, in order to appeaſe him, if poſſible, and prevent the ill Effects of his juſt Indignation.

The News that *Heloiſe* was privately withdrawn ſoon made a great Noiſe in the Neighbourhood; and reaching *Fulbert*'s Ears, fill'd him with Grief and Melancholy. Beſides that he had a very tender Affection for his Niece, and could not live without her, he had the utmoſt Reſentment of the Affront which *Abelard* had put upon him, by abuſing the Freedom he had allowed him. This fired him with ſuch implacable Fury, as in the end fell heavy upon our poor Lovers, and had very dreadful Conſequences.

When *Fulbert* ſaw *Abelard*, and heard from him the Reaſon why *Heloiſe* was withdrawn, never was Man in ſuch a Paſſion. He abandon'd himſelf to the utmoſt Tranſactions of Rage, Deſpair, and Thirſt of Revenge. All the Affronts, Reproaches and Menaces that could be thought of were heaped upon *Abelard*; who was, poor Man, very paſſive, and ready to make the Canon all the Satisfaction he was able.

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able. He gave him leave to ſay what he pleaſed; and when he ſaw that he had tired himſelf with exclaiming, he took up the Diſcourſe, and ingenuouſly confeſt his Crime. Then he had Recourſe to all the Prayers, Submiſſions aud Promiſes he could invent; and begg'd of him to conſider the Force of Love, and what Foils this Tyrant has given to the greateſt Men: That the Occaſion of the preſent Misfortunes, was the moſt violent Paſſion that ever was; that this Paſſion continued ſtill; and that he was ready to give both him and his Niece all the Satisfaction which this ſort of Injury required. Will you marry her then? ſaid *Fulbert*, interrupting him. Yes, replied *Abelard*, if you pleaſe, and ſhe will conſent. If I pleaſe! ſaid the Canon, pauſing a little; if ſhe will conſent! And do you queſtion either? Upon this he was going to offer him his Reaſons, after his haſty way, why they ſhould be married: But *Abelard* entreated him to ſuppreſs his Paſſion a while, and hear what he had to offer; which was, that their Marriage might for ſome time be kept ſecret. No, ſays the Canon; the Diſhonour you have done my Niece is publick, and the Reparation you make her ſhall be ſo too, But *Abelard* told him, that ſince they were to be one Family, he hoped he would conſider his Intereſt as his own. At laſt, after a great many Entreaties, *Fulbert* ſeemed content it ſhould be as *Abelard* deſired, that he ſhould marry *Heloiſe* after ſhe was brought to Bed, and that in the mean time the Buſineſs ſhould be kept ſecret.

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Abelard, having given his Scholars a Vacation, returned into *Britany*, to visit his designed Spouse, and to acquaint her with what had passed. She was not at all concern'd at her Uncle's Displeasure; but that which troubled her was, the Resolution which she saw her Lover had taken to marry her. She endeavour'd to dissuade him from it with all the Arguments she could think of. She begun with representing to him the Wrong he did himself in thinking of Marriage: That as she never loved him but for his own sake, she preferr'd his Glory, Reputation and Interest before her own. I know my Uncle, said she, will never be pacified with any thing we can do: And what Honour shall I get by being your Wife, when at the same time I certainly ruin your Reputation? What Curse may I not justly fear, should I rob the World of so eminent a Person as you are? What an Injury shall I do the Church? How much shall I disoblige the Learned? And what a Shame and Disparagement will it be to you, whom Nature has fitted for the publick Good, to devote yourself entirely to a Wife? Remember what St. *Paul* says, *Art thou loosed from a Wife? seek not a Wife?* If neither this great Man, nor the Fathers of the Church, can make you change your Resolution, consider at least what your Philosophers say of it. *Socrates* has proved, by many Arguments, that a wise Man ought not to marry. *Tully* put away his Wife *Terentia*; and when *Hircius* offered him his Sister in Marriage, he told him he desired to be excus-

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ed, because he could never bring himself to divide his Thoughts between his Books and his Wife. In short, said she, how can the Study of Divinity and Philosophy comport with the Cries of Children, the Songs of Nurses, and all the Hurry of a Family? What an odd sight will it be, to see Maids and Scholars, Desks and Cradles, Books and Distaffs, Pens and Spindles one among another? Those who are rich are never disturb'd with the Care and Charges of Housekeeping. But with you Scholars it is far otherwise. * He that will get an Estate must mind the Affairs of the World, and consequently is taken off from the study of Divinity and Philosophy. Observe the Conduct of the wise Pagans in this Point, who preferr'd a single Life before Marriage, and be asham'd that you cannot come up to them. Be more careful to maintain the Character and Dignity of a Philosopher. Don't you know that there is no Action of Life which draws after it so sure and long a Repentance, and to so little Purpose? You fancy to yourself the Enjoyments you shall have in being bound to me by a Bond which nothing but Death can break: But know, there is no such thing as sweet Chains; and there is a thousand times more Glory, Honour, and Pleasure in keeping firm to a Union which Love alone has established, which is supported by mutual Esteem and Merit, and which owes its continuance to nothing but the Satisfaction of seeing each

* *Heloissa debortabat me a nuptiis. Nuptiæ non conveniunt cum philosophia*, &c. Oper. Abel. p. 14.

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each other free. Shall the Laws and Cuſtoms which the groſs and carnal World has invented, hold us together more ſurely than the Bonds of mutual Affection? Take my word for it, you'll ſee me too often, when you ſee me every Day: you'll have no Value for my Love nor Favours, when they are due to you, and coſt you no Care. Perhaps you don't think of all this at preſent; but you'll think of nothing elſe when it will be too late. I don't take notice what the World will ſay, to ſee a Man in your Circumſtances get him a Wife, and ſo throw away your Reputation, your Fortune, and your Quiet. In ſhort, continued ſhe, the Quality of Miſtreſs is a hundred times more pleaſing to me, than that of Wife. Cuſtom indeed has given a Dignity to this latter Name, and we are impoſed upon by it; but Heaven is my Witneſs, I had rather be *Abelard*'s Miſtreſs, than lawful Wife to the Emperor of the whole World. I am very ſure I ſhall always prefer your Advantage and Satisfaction, before my own Honour, and all the Reputation, Wealth, and Enjoyments, which the moſt ſplendid Marriage could bring me. Thus *Heloiſe* argued, and added a great many more Reaſons, which I forbear to relate, leſt I ſhould tire my Reader. It is enough for him to know, that they are chiefly grounded upon her Preference of Love to Marriage, and Liberty to Neceſſity.

We might therefore ſuppoſe that *Heloiſe* was afraid leſt Marriage ſhould prove the Tomb of Love. The Count *de Buſſi*, who paſſes for

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the Tranſlator of ſome of her Letters, makes this to be her Meaning, though cloathed in delicate Language. But if we examine thoſe which ſhe writ to *Abelard* after their Separation, and the Expreſſions ſhe uſes to put him in Mind, that he was indebted for the Paſſion ſhe had for him to nothing but Love itſelf, we muſt allow that ſhe had more refined Notions, and that never Woman was ſo diſintereſted. She loved *Abelard*, 'tis true; but ſhe declared, it was not his Sex that ſhe moſt valued in him.

Some Authors * are of Opinion, that it was not an Exceſs of Love which made *Abelard* preſs *Heloiſe* to Marriage, but only to quiet his Conſcience: But how can any one tell his Reaſons for Marriage, better than he himſelf? Others ſay †, that if *Heloiſe* did really oppoſe *Abelard*'s Deſign of marrying her ſo earneſtly, it was not becauſe ſhe thought better of Concubinage than a married Life; but becauſe her Affection and Reſpect for her Lover, leading her to ſeek his Honour and Advantage in all Things, ſhe was afraid that by marrying him, ſhe ſhould ſtand between him and a Biſhoprick, which ſhe that his Wit and Learning well deſerved. But there is no ſuch thing in her Letters, nor in the long Account which *Abelard* has left us of the Arguments which his Miſtreſs uſed to diſſuade him from Marriage, Theſe are the Faults of many Authors, who put ſuch Words in the Mouths of Perſons, as are moſt conformable to their own Ideas. It is often more advantageous that a Woman ſhould leave

* *Moreri Dict.* † *Fran. d'Amboiſe.*

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leave her Lover free for Church-Dignities, than render him incapable of them by Marriage. But is it juſt therefore to ſuppoſe, that *Heloiſe* had any ſuch Motives? There is indeed a known Story of a Man that was poſſeſſed of a Prebend, and quitted it for a Wife. The Day after the Wedding, he ſaid to his Bride, My Dear, conſider how paſſionately I loved you, ſince I loſt my Preferment to marry you. You have done a very fooliſh Thing, ſaid ſhe; you might have kept that, and have had me notwithſtanding.

But to return to our Lovers. A modern Author, who well underſtood human Nature, has affirmed; † *That Women by the Favours they grant to Men grow the fonder of them; but, on the contrary, the Men grow more indifferent.* This is not always true. *Abelard* was not the leſs enamour'd with *Heloiſe*, after ſhe had given him the utmoſt Proofs of her Love; and their Familiarity was ſo far from having abated his Flame, that it ſeems all the Eloquence of *Heloiſe* could not perſuade *Abelard*, that he wrong'd himſelf in thinking to marry her. He admir'd the Wit, the Paſſion, and the Ingenuity of his Miſtreſs; but in theſe things he did not come ſhort of her: He knew ſo well how to repreſent to her the Neceſſity of Marriage, the Diſcourſe which he had about it with *Fulbert*, his Rage if they declin'd it, and how dangerous it might be to both of them, that at laſt ſhe conſented to do whatever he pleas'd: but ſtill with an inconceivable Reluctance, which ſhew'd that

† *M. de la Bruyere.*

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ſhe yielded for no other Reaſon, but the fear of diſobliging him.

Abelard was willing to be near his Miſtreſs till ſhe was brought to Bed, which in a ſhort time ſhe was of a Boy. As ſoon as *Heloiſe* was fit to go abroad, *Abelard* carried her to *Paris*, where they were married in the moſt private manner that could be, having no other Company but *Fulbert*, and two or three particular Friends. However, the Wedding quickly came to be known. The News of it was already whiſper'd about; People ſoon began to talk of it more openly, till at laſt they mention'd it to the married Pair. *Fulbert*, who was leſs concern'd to keep his Word, than to cover the Reproach of his Family, took care to ſpread it abroad. But *Heloiſe*, who loved *Abelard* a thouſand times better than ſhe did herſelf, and always valued her dear Doctor's Honour above her own, denied it with the moſt ſolemn Proteſtations, and did all ſhe could to make the World believe her. She conſtantly affirm'd, that the Reports of it were mere Slanders; That *Abelard* never propoſed any ſuch thing; and if he had, ſhe would never have conſented to it. In ſhort, ſhe denied it ſo conſtantly, and with ſuch Earneſtneſs, that ſhe was generally believed. Many People thought, and boldly affirm'd, that the Doctor's Enemies had ſpread this Story on purpoſe to leſſen his Character. This Report came to *Fulbert*'s Ears, who, knowing that *Heloiſe* was the ſole Author of it, fell into ſo outragious a Paſſion at her, that after

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ter a thouſand Reproaches and Menaces he proceeded to uſe her barbarouſly. But *Abelard*, who loved her never the worſe for being his Wife, could not ſee this many Days with Patience. He reſolv'd therefore to order Matters ſo as to deliver her from this State of Perſecution. To this purpoſe they conſulted together what Courſe was to be taken; and agreed, that for ſetting them both free, her from the Power and ill Humour of her Uncle, and him from the perſecuting Reports which went about of him, *Heloiſe* ſhould retire into a Convent, where ſhe ſhould take the Habit of a Nun, all but the Veil, that ſo ſhe might eaſily come out again, when they ſhould have a more favourable Opportunity. This Deſign was propoſed, approved, and executed, almoſt at the ſame time. By this means they effectually put a a ſtop to all Reports about their Marriage. But the Canon was too dangerous a Perſon to be admitted to this Conſultation; he would never have agreed to their Propoſal; nor could he hear of it without the utmoſt Rage. 'Twas then that he conceived a new Deſire of Revenge, which he purſued till he had executed it in the moſt cruel manner imaginable. This Retreat of *Heloiſe* gave him the more ſenſible Affliction, becauſe ſhe was ſo far from covering her own Reputation, that ſhe compleated his Shame. He conſider'd it as *Abelard*'s Contrivance, and a freſh Inſtance of his perfidious Dealing towards him. And this Reflection put him upon ſtudying how to be reveng'd on them both at one Stroke; which

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aiming at the Root of the Miſchief, ſhould for ever diſable them from offending again.

While this Plot was in Agitation, the Lovers, who were not apt to trouble their Heads about what might happen, ſpent their Time in the moſt agreeable manner that could be. *Abelard* could not live long without a ſight of his dear Wife. He made her frequent Viſits in the Convent of *Argenteuil*, to which ſhe was retired. The Nuns of this Abbey enjoy'd a very free kind of Life: The Grates and Parlours were open enough. As for *Heloiſe*, ſhe had ſuch excellent Qualifications, as made the good Siſters very fond of her, and extreamly pleaſed that they had ſuch an amiable Companion. And as they were not ignorant what Reports there were abroad, that ſhe was married to the famous *Abelard*, (tho' ſhe denied it to the laſt) the moſt diſcerning among them, obſerving the frequent Viſits of the Doctor, eaſily imagin'd that ſhe had Reaſons for keeping herſelf private, and ſo they took her Caſe into Conſideration, and expreſt a wonderful Compaſſion for her Misfortunes.

Some of them, whom *Heloiſe* loved above the reſt, and in whom ſhe put great Confidence, were not a little aiding and aſſiſting in the private Interviews which ſhe had with *Abelard*, and in giving him Opportunities to enter the Convent. The amorous Doctor made the beſt Uſe of every thing: The Habit which *Heloiſe* wore, the Place where he was to ſee her, the Times and Seaſons proper for his Viſit; the Stratagems which muſt be uſed to facilitate his Entrance,

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Entrance, and carry him undiſcover'd to *Heloiſe*'s Chamber; the Difficulties they met with, the Reaſons they had for not letting it be known who they were; and the Fear they were in of being taken together: All this gave their Amours an Air of Novelty, and added to their lawful Embraces all the Taſte of ſtolen Delights.

Theſe Exceſſes had then their Charms, but in the End had fatal Conſequences: The furious Canon perſiſting in his Deſign of being revenged on *Abelard*, notwithſtanding his Marriage with his Niece, found Means to corrupt a Domeſtic of the unfortunate Doctor, who gave Admittance into his Maſter's Chamber to ſome Aſſaſſins hired by *Fulbert*, who ſeized him in his Sleep, and cruelly deprived him of his Manhood, but not his Life. The Servant and his Accomplices fled for it; the wretched *Abelard* raiſed ſuch terrible Outcries, that the People in the Houſe and the Neighbours being alarm'd, haſten'd to him, and gave him ſuch ſpeedy Aſſiſtance, that he was ſoon out of a Condition of fearing Death.

The News of this Accident made a great Noiſe, and its Singularity raiſed the Curioſity of abundance of Perſons, who came the next Day, as in Proceſſion, to ſee, to lament and comfort him. His Scholars loudly bewailed his Misfortune, and the Women diſtinguiſh'd themſelves upon this Occaſion, by extraordinary Marks of Tenderneſs. And 'tis probable among the great Number of Ladies which pityed *Abelard*, there were ſome with whom

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he had been very intimate: For his Philoſophy did not make him ſcrupulous enough to eſteem every ſmall Infidelity a Crime, when it did not leſſen his conſtant Love of *Heloiſe*.

This Action of *Fulbert* was too tragical to paſs unpuniſh'd; the traiterous Servant and one of the Aſſaſſins were ſeized, and condemned to loſe their Eyes, and to ſuffer what they done to *Abelard*. But *Fulbert* denying he had any Share in the Action, ſaved himſelf from the Puniſhment, with the Loſs only of his Benefices. This Sentence did not ſatisfy *Abelard*; he made his Complaint to no purpoſe to the Biſhop and Canons; and if he had made a Remonſtrance at *Rome*, where he once had a Deſign of carrying the Matter, 'tis probable he would have had no better Succeſs. It requires too much Money to gain a Cauſe there. One *Foulques*, Prior of *Deuil*, an intimate Friend of *Abelard*, wrote thus to him upon the Occaſion of his Misfortune. * *If you appeal to the Pope, without bringing an immenſe Sum of Money, it will be uſeleſs; nothing can ſatisfy the infinite Avarice and Luxury of the* Romans. *I queſtion if you have enough for ſuch an Undertaking; and if you attempt it, nothing will perhaps remain but the Vexation of having flung away ſo much Money. They who go to* Rome *without large Sums to ſquander away, will return juſt as they went, the Expence of their Journey only excepted.* But ſince I am upon *Foulques*'s Letter, which is too extraordinary to be paſſed over in Silence, I ſhall give the Reader ſome Reflections

* *This Letter is extant in* Latin *in* Abelard's *Works.*

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Reflections which may make him Amends for the Trouble of a new Digreſſion.

This Friend of *Abelard* lays before him many Advantages which might be drawn from his Misfortune. He tells him, his extraordinary Talents, Subtilty, Eloquence and Learning, had drawn from all Parts an incredible Number of Auditors, and ſo fill'd him with exceſſive Vanity: Hints gently at another thing, which contributed not a little towards making him proud: namely, that the Women continually followed him, and gloried in drawing him into their Snares. This Misfortune therefore would cure him of his Pride, and free him from thoſe Snares of Women which had reduced him even to Indigence, tho' his Profeſſion got him a large Revenue: and now he would never impoveriſh himſelf by his Gallantries.

Heloiſe herſelf in ſome Paſſages of her Letters ſays, that there was neither Maid nor Wife *, who in *Abelard*'s Abſence did not form Deſires for him, and in his Preſence was not inflamed with Love: That Queens themſelves and Ladies of the firſt Quality envied the Pleaſures ſhe enjoy'd with him. But we are not to take theſe Words of *Heloiſe* in a ſtrict Senſe; becauſe as ſhe loved *Abelard* to Madneſs, ſo ſhe imagin'd every one elſe did. Beſides that, Report to be ſure hath added to

* *Quæ conjugata, quæ virgo non concupiſcebat abſentem, & non exardeſcebat in præſentem? Quæ Regina, vel prapotens Fœmina gaudiis meis non invidebat vel Thalamis?*

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the Truth. It is not at all probable that a Man of *Abelard*'s Senſe, and who according to all Appearance paſſionately loved his Wife, ſhould not be able to contain himſelf in ſome Bounds, but ſhould ſquander away all his Money upon Miſtreſſes, even to the not reſerving what was ſufficient to provide for his Neceſſities. *Foulques* owns that he ſpeaks only upon Hear-ſay, and in that no doubt Envy and Jealouſy had their Part.

Foulques tells him beſides, that the Amputation of a Part of his Body, of which he made ſuch ill Uſe, would ſuppreſs at the ſame time a great many troubleſome Paſſions, and procure him the Liberty of reflecting on himſelf, inſtead of being hurried to and fro by his Paſſions; his Meditations would be no more interrupted by the Emotions of the Fleſh, and therefore he would be more ſucceſsful in diſcovering the Secrets of Nature. He reckons it as a great Advantage to him, that he would no more be the Terror of Huſbands, and might now lodge any where without being ſuſpected. And forgets not to acquaint him, he might converſe with the fineſt Women, without any Fear of thoſe Temptations which ſometimes overpower even Age itſelf, upon the ſight of ſuch Objects. And laſtly, he would have the Happineſs of being exempt from the Illuſions of Sleep; which Exemption, according to him, is a peculiar Bleſſing.

It was with Reaſon that *Foulques* reckons all theſe as Advantages very extraordinary in the Life of an Eccleſiaſtic; 'tis eaſy to obſerve that,

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that, to a Perſon who devotes himſelf to Continence, nothing can be more happy than to be inſenſible to Beauty and Love; for they who cannot maintain their Chaſtity, but by continual Combats, are very unhappy: The Life of ſuch Perſons is uneaſy, their State always doubtful. They but too much feel the Trouble of their Warfare, and if they come off victorious in an Engagement, 'tis often with a great many Wounds. Even ſuch of them as in a retired Life are at the greateſt Diſtance from Temptations, by continually ſtruggling with their Inclinations, and ſetting Barriers againſt the Irruptions of the Fleſh, are in a miſerable Condition. Their Entrenchments are often forced; and their Conſcience fill'd with Sorrow and Anxiety. What Progreſs might one make in the Ways of Virtue, who is not obliged to fight an Enemy for every Foot of Ground? Had *Abelard*'s Misfortune made him indeed ſuch as *Foulques* ſuppoſed, we ſhould ſee him in his Letters expreſs his Motives of Comfort with a better Grace. But though he now was in a Condition not able to ſatisfy a Paſſion by which he had ſuffered ſo much, yet was he not inſenſible at the ſight of thoſe Objects which once gave him ſo much Pleaſure. This Diſcourſe therefore of *Foulques*, far from comforting *Abelard* in his Affliction, ſeems capable of producing the contrary Effect; and it is aſtoniſhing if *Abelard* did not take it ſo, and think he rather inſulted him, and conſequently reſent it.

As to Dreams, St. *Auſtin* informs us of the Advantage

Advantage *Foulques* tells his Friend he had gain'd. St. *Auſtin* implores the Grace of God to deliver him from this ſort of Weakneſs, and ſays he gave Conſent to thoſe things in his Sleep which he ſhould abominate awake, and lament exceedingly ſo great a remaining Weakneſs.

But let us go on with this charitable Friend's Letter; it hath too near a Relation to this Hiſtory, to leave any part of it untouched. Matrimonial Functions (continues *Foulques*) and the Cares of a Family, will not now hinder your Application to pleaſe God. And what a Happineſs is it, not to be in a Capacity of Sinning? And then he brings the Examples of St. *Origen*, and other Martyrs, who rejoice now in Heaven, for their being upon Earth in the Condition *Abelard* laments; as if the Impoſſibility of committing a Sin could ſecure any one from deſiring to do it. But one of his greateſt Motives of Comfort, and one upon which he inſiſts the moſt is, becauſe his Misfortune is irreparable. This is indeed true in Fact, but the Conſequence of his Reaſoning is not ſo certain; *Afflict not yourſelf* (ſays he) *becauſe your Misfortune is of ſuch a Nature as is never to be repaired.*

It muſt be owned that the general Topicks of Conſolation have two Faces, and may therefore be conſidered very differently, even ſo as to ſeem Arguments for Sorrow. As for Inſtance, one might argue very juſtly, that a Mother ſhould not yield too much to Grief upon the Loſs of a Son, becauſe her Tears are unavail-

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unavailable; and tho' she should kill herself with Sorrow, she can never by these Means bring her Son to Life. Yet this very thing, that all she can do is useless, is the main Occasion of her Grief; she could bear it patiently, could she any way retrieve her Loss. When *Solon* * lamented the Death of his Son, and some Friend by way of Comfort told him, his Tears were insignificant, *That*, said he, *is the very Reason why I weep.*

But *Foulques* argues much better afterwards; he says, *Abelard* did not suffer this in the Commission of any ill Act, but sleeping peaceably in his Bed. That is, he was not caught in any open Fact, such as has cost others the like Loss. This is indeed a much better Topick than the former, though it must be allowed that *Abelard* had drawn this Misfortune on himself by a Crime as bad as Adultery; yet the Fault was over, and he had made all the Reparation which was in his Power, and when they maimed him he thought no harm to any body.

Abelard's Friend makes use likewise of other consolatory Reasons in his Letter, and represents to him after a very moving manner, the Part which the Bishop and Canon, and all the Ecclesiasticks of *Paris*, took in his Disgrace, and the Mourning there was among the Inhabitants, and especially the Women, upon this Occasion. But in this Article of Consolation, how comes it to pass that he makes no mention of *Heloise?* This ought not to appear

* *Diog. Laert.*

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pear ſtrange; ſhe was the injured, and therefore queſtionleſs her Sorrows were ſufficiently known to him, and it would be no News to tell the Huſband that his Wife was in the utmoſt Affliction for him. For as we obſerved before, tho' ſhe was in a Convent, ſhe had not renounced her Huſband, and thoſe frequent Viſits he made her were not ſpent in reading Homilies. But let us make an End of our Reflections on *Foulques*'s curious Letter. *Foulques*, after adviſing *Abelard* not to think of carrrying the Matter before the Pope, by aſſuring him that it required too great Expence to obtain any Satisfaction at that Court, concludes all with this laſt Motive of Conſolation, that the imagined Happineſs he had loſt was always accompanied with abundance of Vexation; but if he perſevered in his Spirit of Reſignation, he would without doubt at the laſt Day obtain that Juſtice he had now failed of. 'Tis great Pity we have not *Abelard*'s Anſwer to this delicate Letter, the Matter then would look like one of *Job*'s Dialogues with his Friends. *Abelard* would generally have enough to reply, and *Foulques* would often be but a ſorry Comforter. However, it is certain this Letter was of ſome Weight with *Abelard*, for we find afterwards he never thought of making a Voyage to *Rome*. Reſolved to bear his Calamity patiently, he left to God the avenging of the cruel and ſhameful Abuſe he had ſuffered.

But let us return to *Heloiſe*. 'Tis probable her Friends of the Convent of *Argenteuil* conceal'd

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ceal'd ſo heavy a Misfortune from her for ſome Time; but at laſt ſhe heard the fatal News: Though the Rage and Fury of her Uncle threatened her long ſince with ſome Puniſhment, yet could ſhe never ſuſpect any thing of this Nature. It will be ſaying too little to tell the Reader, ſhe felt all the Shame and Sorrow that is poſſible. She only can expreſs thoſe violent Emotions of her Soul upon ſo ſevere an Occaſion.

In all Probability this Misfortune of *Abelard* would have been a thorough Cure of her Paſſion, if we might argue from like Caſes: but there is no Rule ſo general as not to admit of ſome Exceptions; and *Heloiſe*'s Love upon this ſevere Tryal proved like Queen *Stratonice*'s, who was not leſs paſſionate for her Favourite *Combabus*, when ſhe diſcover'd his Impotence, than ſhe had been before.

Shame and Sorrow had no leſs ſeized *Abelard* than *Heloiſe*, nor dared he ever after appear in the World. So that he reſolved, immediately upon his Cure, to baniſh himſelf from the ſight of Men, and hide himſelf in the Darkneſs of a Monaſtic Life; avoiding all Converſation with any kind of Perſons excepting his dear *Heloiſe*, by whoſe Company he endeavoured to comfort himſelf; But ſhe at laſt reſolved to follow his Example, and continue for ever in the Convent of *Argenteuil* where ſhe was. *Abelard* himſelf confeſſes that Shame, rather than Devotion, had made him take the Habit of a Monk; and that it was Jealouſy, more than Love, which engaged him

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him to perſuade *Heloiſe* to be profeſs'd before he had made his Vow. The Letters which follow this Hiſtory will inform us after what Manner and with what Reſolution they ſeparated. *Heloiſe* in the Twenty-ſecond Year of her Age generouſly quitted the World, and renounced all thoſe Pleaſures ſhe might reaſonably have promis'd herſelf; to ſacrifice herſelf entirely to the Fidelity and Obedience ſhe owed her Huſband, and to procure him that Eaſe of Mind which he ſaid he could no other ways hope for.

Time making *Abelard*'s Misfortune familiar to him, he now entertained Thoughts of Ambition, and of ſupporting the Reputation he had gained of the moſt learned Man of the Age. He began with explaining the *Acts of the Apoſtles* to the Monks of the Monaſtery of St. *Dennis*, to which he had retired; but the Diſorders of the Abbey, and the Debauches of the Abbot, which, equally with his Dignity, were ſuperior to thoſe of the ſimple Monks, quickly drove him thence. He had made himſelf uneaſy to them, by cenſuring their Irregularity. They were glad to part with him, and he to leave them.

As ſoon as he had obtained leave of the Abbot, he retired to *Thibaud* in *Champain*, where he ſet up a School; perſuading himſelf that his Reputation would bring him a great Number of Scholars. And indeed they flock'd to him, not only from the moſt diſtant Provinces of *France*, but alſo from *Rome*, *Spain*, *England* and *Germany*, in ſuch Numbers, that the Towns

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Towns could not provide Accommodation, nor the Country Proviſions enough for them*. But *Abelard* did not foreſee, that this Succeſs and Reputation would at the ſame time occaſion him new Troubles. He had made himſelf two conſiderable Enemies at *Leon*, *Alberic* of *Rheims*, and *Lotulf* of *Lombardy*, who, as ſoon as they perceived how prejudicial his Reputation was to their Schools, ſought all Occaſions to ruin him: and thought they had a lucky Handle to do ſo from a Book of his entitled *The Myſtery of the Trinity*; this they pretended was Heretical, and thro' the Archbiſhop's Means they procured a Council at *Soiſſons* in the Year 1121; and without ſuffering *Abelard* to make any Defence, ordered his Book to be burnt by his own Hands, and himſelf to be confined to the Convent of St. *Medard*. This Sentence gave him ſuch Grief, that he ſays himſelf the unhappy Fate of his Writings touched him more ſenſibly than the Misfortune he had ſuffer'd through *Fulbert*'s Means. Nor was it only his Fatherly Concern for his own Productions, but the indelible Mark of Hereſy which by this Means was fixed on him, which ſo exceedingly troubled him.

That the curious Reader may have a compleat Knowledge of this Matter, I ſhall here give an Account of that pretended Hereſy which was imputed to *Abelard*. The Occaſion of

* *Ad quas Scholas tanta Scholarium multitudo confluxit, ut nec locus Hoſpitiis, nec terra ſufficeret Alimentis.* Abel. Oper. p. 19.

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of his Writing this Book was, that his Scholars demanded * Philoſophical Arguments on that Subject; often urging that it was impoſſible to Believe what was not Underſtood; That it was to abuſe the World to Preach a Doctrine, equally unintelligible to the Speaker and Auditor; and that it was for *the Blind to lead the Blind.* Theſe young Men were certainly inclined to *Sabelliniſm. Abelard*'s Enemies however did not accuſe him of falling into this, but another Hereſy as bad, *Tritheiſm*, though indeed he was equally free from both; he explained the Unity of the Godhead by Compariſons drawn from Human Things, but according to a Paſſage of St. *Bernard* †, one of his greateſt Enemies, he ſeemed to hold that no one ought to believe what he could not give a Reaſon for. However, *Abelard*'s Treatiſe upon this Subject pleaſed every one except thoſe of his own Profeſſion, who, ſtung with Envy, that he ſhould find out Explanations which they could not have thought of, raiſed ſuch a Cry of Hereſy upon him, that he and ſome of his Scholars had like to have been ſtoned ‡ by the Mob. By their powerful Cabals they prevailed with *Conan* Biſhop of *Preneſte*,

* *Humanas & philoſophicas rationes requirebant, & plus quæ intelligi, quam quæ dici poſſent efflagitabant.* Abel. Op.

† *Bernardi Epiſt.* 190.

‡ *Ita me in Clero & Populo diffamaverunt, ut penè me populos paucoſque qui advenerant ex Diſcipulis noſtris prima Die noſtri adventus lapidarent; dicentes me tres Deos prædicare & ſcripſiſſe, ſicut ipſis perſuaſum fuerat.* Abel. Op. p. 20.

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neſte, the Pope's Legate, who was Preſident of the Council, to condemn his Book, pretending, that he aſſerted three Gods, which they might eaſily ſuggeſt, when he was ſuffered to make no Defence. 'Tis certain he was very Orthodox in the Doctrine of the Trinity; and all this Proceſs againſt him was only occaſioned by the Malice of his Enemies. His Logical Compariſon (and Logic was his Maſter-piece) proved rather the Three Divine Perſons One, than multiplied the Divine Nature into Three. His Compariſon is, that as the three Propoſitions * in a Syllogiſm are but one Truth, ſo the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, are but one Eſſence. And 'tis certain the Inconveniences which may be drawn from this Parallel are not more than what may be drawn from the Compariſon of the three Dimenſions of Solids, ſo much inſiſted on by that famous Orthodox Mathematician Dr. *Wallis* of *England*. But great Numbers of Pious and Learned Divines, who have not been over-ſubtle in Politicks, have been perſecuted and condemned as well as *Abelard*, by the Ignorance and Malice of their caballing Brethren.

A little after his Condemnation, *Abelard* was ordered to return to St. *Dennis*. The Liberty he had taken to cenſure the vicious Lives of the Monks had raiſed him a great many Enemies. Among theſe was St. *Bernard*, not upon the ſame Motives as thoſe Monks, but becauſe

* *Sicut eadem oratio eſt, propoſitio, aſſumptio & concluſio, ita eadem Eſſentia eſt Pater, Filius, & Spiritus Sanctus.* Abel. Op. p. 20.

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becauſe *Abelard*'s great Wit, join'd with ſo looſe and ſenſual a Life, gave him Jealouſy, who thought it impoſſible the Heart ſhould be defiled without the Head being likewiſe tainted.

Scarce had he return'd to St. *Dennis*, when one Day he dropt ſome Words, intimating he did not believe that the St. *Dennis* their Patron was the Areopagite mention'd in the Scripture, there being no Probability that he ever was in *France*. This was immediately carried to the Abbot, who was full of Joy, that he had now a Handle to heighten the Accuſations of Hereſy againſt him with ſome Crime againſt the State; a Method frequently uſed by this Sort of Gentlemen to make ſure their Revenge. In thoſe Times too the contradicting the Notions of the Monks was enough to prove a Man an Atheiſt, Heretick, Rebel, or any thing: Learning ſignified nothing. If any one of a clearer Head and larger Capacity had the Misfortune to be ſuſpected of Novelty, there was no way to avoid the general Perſecution of the Monks, but voluntarily baniſhing himſelf. The Abbot immediately aſſembled all the Houſe, and declared he would deliver up to the ſecular Power a Perſon who had dar'd to reflect upon the Honour of the Kingdom and of the Crown. *Abelard* very rightly judging that ſuch Threatnings were not to be deſpiſed, fled by Night to *Champain*, to a Cloyſter of the Monks of *Troies*, and there patiently waited till the Storm ſhould be over. After the Death of this Abbot, which, very luckily for him, happened ſoon after his Flight, he obtained Leave to live

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live where he pleaſed, tho' it was not without uſing ſome Cunning. He knew the Monks of ſo rich a Houſe had fallen into great Exceſſes, and were very obnoxious to the Court, who would not fail to make their Profit of it: He therefore procured it ſhould be repreſented to the Council, as very diſadvantageous to his Majeſty's Intereſt, that a Perſon who was continually cenſuring the Lives of his Brethren ſhould continue any longer with them. This was immediately underſtood, and Orders given to ſome great Men at Court to demand of the Abbot and Monks, why they kept a Perſon in their Houſe whoſe Conduct was ſo diſagreeable to them, and far from being an Ornament to the Society, was a continual Vexation, by publiſhing their Faults? This being very opportunely moved to the new Abbot, he gave *Abelard* leave to retire to what Cloiſter he pleaſed.

Abelard, who had indeed all the Qualities which make a great Man, could not however bear, without repining, the numerous Misfortunes with which he ſaw himſelf embarraſs'd, and had frequent Thoughts of publiſhing a Manifeſto to juſtify himſelf from the ſcandalous Imputations his Enemies had laid upon him, and to undeceive thoſe whom their Malice had prejudiced againſt him. But upon cooler Thought, he determined that it was better to ſay nothing, and to ſhew them by his Silence how unworthy he thought them of his Anger. Thus being rather enraged than troubled at the Injuries he had ſuffered, he reſolved

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ſolved to found a new Society conſiſting chiefly of Monks. To this purpoſe he choſe a Solitude in the Dioceſe of *Troies*, and upon ſome Ground which was given by Permiſſion of the Biſhop, he built a little Houſe, and a Chapel, which he dedicated to the moſt Holy Trinity.

Men of Learning were then ſcarce, and the Deſire of Science was beginning to ſpread itſelf. Our Exile was enquired after and found, Scholars crowded to him from all Parts: They built little Huts, and were very liberal to their Maſter for his Lectures; content to live on Herbs and Roots and Water, that they might have the Advantage of Learning from ſo extraordinary a Man; and with great Zeal they enlarged the Chapel, building that and their Profeſſor's Houſe with Wood and Stone.

Upon this occaſion, *Abelard*, to continue the Memory of the Comfort he had received in this Deſart, dedicated his New-built Chapel to the Holy Ghoſt, by the Name of the *Paraclete* or Comforter. The Envy of *Alberic* and *Lotulf*, which had long ſince perſecuted him, was ſtrangely revived, upon ſeeing ſo many Scolars flock to him from all Parts, notwithſtanding the Inconvenience of the Place, and in contempt of the Maſters who might ſo commodiouſly have been found in the Towns and Cities.

They now more than ever ſought Occaſions to trouble him; the Name of *Paraclete* furniſhed them with one; they gave out that this Novelty was a Conſequence of his former Hereſy,

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and that it was no more lawful to dedicate Churches to the Holy Ghoſt, than to God the Father: That this Title was a ſubtle Art of inſtilling that Poiſon which he durſt not ſpread openly; and a Conſequence of his Heretical Doctrine which had been condemned already by a Council. This Report raiſed a great Clamour among Numbers of People, whom his Enemies employed on all Sides. But the Perſecution grew more terrible when St. *Bernard* and St. *Norbet* declared againſt him, two great Zealots, fir'd with the Spirit of Reformation, and who declared themſelves Reſtorers of the Primitive Diſcipline, and had wonderfully gain'd upon the Affections of the Populace. They ſpread ſuch Scandal againſt him, that they prejudiced his principal Friends, and forced thoſe who ſtill loved him not to ſhew it any ways; and upon theſe Accounts made his Life ſo bitter to him that he was upon the Point of leaving *Chriſtendom* *. But his Unhappineſs would not let him do a thing which might have procured his Eaſe; but made him ſtill continne with Chriſtians, and with Monks (as himſelf expreſſes it) worſe than Heathens †.

The Duke of *Britany*, informed of his Misfortunes, and of the Barbarity of his Enemies, named

* *Sæpe autem (Deus ſcit) in tantam lapſus ſum deſperationem ut Chriſtianorum finibus exceſſis, ad Gentes tranſire diſponerem, atque ibi quietè ſub quacunque tributi pactione inter inimicos Chriſti chriſtianè vivere.* Abel. Op. p. 32.

† *Incedi in Chriſtianos atque Monachos Gentibus longè ſæviores atque pejores.* Ibid.

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named him to the Abbey of St. *Gildas* in the Dioceſe of *Vannes*, at the Deſire of the Monks, who had already elected him for their Superior. Here he thought he had found a Refuge from the Rage of his Enemies, but in Reality he had only chang'd one Trouble for another. The profligate Lives of the Monks, and the Arbitrarineſs of a Lord, who had deprived them of the greater Part of their Revenues, ſo that they were obliged to maintain their Miſtreſſes and Children at their own private Expence, occaſioned him a thouſand Vexations and Dangers. They ſeveral times endeavoured to poiſon him in his ordinary Diet, but proving unſucceſsful that way, they try'd to do it in the Holy Sacrament. Excommunications, with which he threaten'd the moſt mutinous, did not at all abate the Diſorder; he now feared the Poniard more than Poiſon, and compared his Caſe to His whom the Tyrant of *Syracuſe* cauſed to be ſeated at his Table, with a Sword hanging over him faſten'd only by a Thread.

Whilſt *Abelard* thus ſuffer'd in his Abbey by his Monks; the Nuns of *Argenteuil*, of whom *Heloiſe* was Prioreſs, grew ſo licentious, that *Sugger* Abbot of *Dennis* taking Advantage of their Irregularities, got Poſſeſſion of their Monaſtery. He ſent the original Writings to *Rome*, and having obtain'd the Anſwer he deſired, he expelled the Nuns, and eſtabliſh'd in their Place Monks of his Order.

So cenſorious People upon reading this Paſſage will be apt to entertain ſtrong Suſpi-

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cions of *Heloiſe*; and judge it probable that a Governor does not behave well, when Diſſoluteneſs is known to reign in the Society. I have never read that ſhe was included by Name in the general Scandal of the Society, and therefore am cautious not to bring any Accuſations againſt her. Our Saviour ſays, *No one hath condemn'd thee, neither do I condemn Thee.*

Heloiſe, at her Departure from the Convent of *Argenteuil*, apply'd to her Huſband; who, by Permiſſion of the Biſhop of *Troies*, gave her the Houſe and Chapel of the *Paraclete*, with its Appendages; and placing there ſome Nuns, founded a Nunnery. Pope *Innocent* II. confirmed this Donation in the Year 1131. This is the Origin of the Abbey of the *Paraclete*, of which *Heloiſe* was the firſt Abbeſs. Whatever her Conduct was among the licentious Nuns of *Argenteuil*, 'tis certain ſhe lived ſo regular in this her new and laſt Retreat, and behaved herſelf with that Prudence, Zeal and Piety, that ſhe won the Hearts of all the World, and in a ſmall time had abundance of Donations. *Abelard* himſelf ſays, ſhe had more in one Year, than he could have expected all his Life, had he lived there. The Biſhops loved her as their Child, the Abbeſſes as their Siſter, and the World as their Mother. It muſt be owned ſome Women have had wonderful Talents for exciting Chriſtian Charity. The Abbeſſes which ſucceeded *Heloiſe* have often been of the greateſt Families in the Kingdom. There is a Liſt of them in the

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Notes of *Andrew du Chene* upon *Abelard*'s Works, from the Time of the Foundation in 1130, to 1615, but he has not thought fit to take notice of *Jane Cabot*, who died the 25th of *June* 1593, and profes's'd the Proteſtant Religion, yet without marrying, or quitting her Habit, tho' ſhe was driven from her Abbey.

After *Abelard* had ſettled *Heloiſe* here, he made frequent Journeys from *Britany* to *Champain*, to take Care of the Intereſt of this riſing Houſe, and to eaſe himſelf from the Vexations of his own Abbey. But Slander ſo perpetually followed this unhappy Man, that tho' his preſent Condition was univerſally known, he was reproach'd with a remaining voluptuous Paſſion for his former Miſtreſs. He complains of his hard Uſage in one of his Letters; but comforts himſelf by the Example of St. *Jerom*, whoſe Friendſhip with *Paula* occaſion'd Scandal too; and though he entirely confuted this Calumny, by remarking that even the moſt Jealous commit their Wives to the Cuſtody of Eunuchs.

The thing which gives the greateſt Handle to ſuſpect *Heloiſe*'s Prudence, and that *Abelard* did not think himſelf ſafe with her, is his making a Reſolution to ſeparate himſelf for ever from her. During his being employ'd in eſtabliſhing this new Nunnery, and in ordering their Affairs, as well Temporal as Spiritual, he was diligent in perſuading her by frequent and pious Admonitions to ſuch a Separation; and inſiſted that in order to make their Retirement and Penitence more profitable, it was abſolutely

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absolutely necessary they should seriously endeavour to forget each other, and for the future think on nothing but God. When he had given her Directions for her own Conduct, and Rules for the Management of the Nuns, he took his last leave of her, and return'd to his Abbey in *Britany*, where he continued a long time without her hearing any Mention of him.

By chance a Letter he wrote to one of his Friends to comfort him under some Disgraces, wherein he had given him a long Account of all the Persecutions he himself had suffer'd, fell into *Heloise*'s Hands. She knew by the Superscription from whom it came, and her Curiosity made her open it; the reading the Particulars of a Story she was so much concern'd in renew'd all her Passion, and she hence took an Occasion to write to him, complaining of his long Silence. *Abelard* could not forbear answering her; this occasion'd the several letters between them which follow this History; and in these we may observe how high a Woman is capable of raising the Sentiments of her Heart, when possess'd of a great deal of Wit and Learning, as well as a most violent Love.

I shall not tire the Reader with any farther Reflections on the Letters of these two Lovers, but leave them entirely to his own Judgment: only remarking, that he ought not to be surprised to find *Heloise*'s more Tender, Passionate and Expressive than those of *Abelard*: She was Younger, and consequently more Ardent than he. The sad condition he was in

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had not altered her Love. Beſides, ſhe retired only in complaiſance to a Man ſhe blindly yielded to; and reſolved to preſerve her Fidelity inviolable, ſhe ſtrove to conquer her Deſires, and make a Virtue of Neceſſity. But the Weakneſs of her Sex continually returned, and ſhe felt the Force of Love in Spite of all Reſiſtance. It was not the ſame with *Abelard*; for tho' it was a Miſtake to think, that by not being in a Condition of ſatisfying his Paſſion, he was, as *Heloiſe* imagined, wholly deliver'd from the Thorn of Senſuality; yet he was truly ſorry for the Diſorders of his paſt Life, he was ſincerely Penitent, and therefore his Letters are leſs Violent and Paſſionate than thoſe of *Heloiſe*.

About Ten Years after *Abelard* had retired to his Abbey, where Study was his chief Buſineſs, his Enemies, who had reſolved to Perſecute him to the laſt, were careful not to let him enjoy the Eaſe of Retirement: They thought he was not ſufficiently plagued with his Monks, and therefore brought a new Proceſs of Hereſy againſt him before the Archbiſhop of *Sens*. He deſired he might have the Liberty of defending his Doctrine before a publick Aſſembly, and it was granted him. Upon this Account the Council of *Sens* was aſſembled, in which *Louis* the VIIth aſſiſted in Perſon, in the Year 1140. St. *Bernard* was the Accuſer, and delivered to the Aſſembly ſome Propoſitions drawn from *Abelard*'s Book, which were read in the Council. This Accuſation gave

Abelard

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Abelard ſuch Fears, and was managed with ſuch inveterate Malice by his Enemies, and with ſuch great Unfairneſs in drawing Conſequences he never thought of; that imagining he had Friends at *Rome* who would protect his Innocence, he made an Appeal to the Pope. The Council, notwithſtanding his Appeal, condemn'd his Book, but did not meddle with his Perſon; and gave an Account of the whole Proceeding to Pope *Innocent* II; praying him to confirm their Sentence. St. *Bernard* had been ſo early in prepoſſeſſing the Pontiff, that he got the Sentence confirmed before *Abelard* heard any thing of it, or had any Time to preſent himſelf before the Tribunal, to which he had appealed. His Holineſs ordered beſides, that *Abelard*'s Books ſhould be burnt, himſelf confined, and for ever prohibited from Teaching.

This Paſſage of St. *Bernard*'s Life is not much for the Honour of his Memory: And whether he took the Trouble himſelf to extract the condemn'd Propoſitions from *Abelard*'s Works, or intruſted it to another Hand, 'tis certain the Paper he gave in contain'd many things which *Abelard* never wrote, and others which he did not mean in the Senſe imputed to him.

When a few particular Expreſſions are urged too rigidly, and unthought-of Conſequences drawn from ſome Aſſertions, and no Regard is had to the general Intent and Scope of an Author, it is no difficult Matter to find Errors in any Book. For this Reaſon *Be-*

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ranger of *Poitiers*, *Abelard*'s Scholar, defended his Master against St. *Bernard*, telling him, he ought not to persecute others, whose own Writings were not exempt from Errors; demonstrating that he himself had advanced a Position, which he would not have fail'd to have inserted in his Extract as a monstrous Doctrine, if he had found them in the Writings of *Abelard*.

Some time after *Abelard*'s Condemnation, the Pope was appeased at the Sollicitation of the Abbot of *Clugni*, who received this unfortunate Gentleman in his Monastery with great Humanity, reconcil'd him with St. *Bernard*, and admitted him to be a Religious of his Society.

This was *Abelard*'s last Retirement, in which he found all manner of Kindness; he read Lectures to the Monks, and was equally humble and laborious. At last growing weak, and afflicted with a Complication of Diseases, he was sent to the Priory of St. *Marcel* upon the *Saone*, near *Chalons*, a very agreeable Place, where he died the 21st of *April*, 1142, in the 63d Year of his Age. His Corps was sent to the Chapel of the *Paraclete*, to *Heloise*, to be interred, according to her former Request of him, and to his own Desire. The Abbot of *Clugni*, when he sent the Body to *Heloise*, according to the Custom of those Times, sent with it an Absolution to be fixed together with his Epitaph on his Grave-stone, which Absolution was as follows.

I Peter

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I Peter *Abbot of* Clugni, *having received Father* Abelard *into the number of my Religious, and now given leave that his Body be privately convey'd to the Abbey of the* Paraclete, *to be disposed of by* Heloise, *Abbess of the same Abbey; do by the Authority of God and all the Saints, absolve the said* Abelard *from all his Sins* *.

Heloise, who survived him twenty Years, had all the leisure that could be to effect the Cure of her unhappy Passion. Alas! she was very long about it! She past the rest of her Days like a religious and devout Abbess, frequent in Prayer, and entirely employed in the Regulation of her Society. She loved Study, and being a Mistress of the learned Languages, the *Latin*, *Greek* and *Hebrew*, she was esteemed a miracle of Learning. *Abelard*, in a Letter he wrote to the Religious of his new House, says expresly, that *Heloise* understood these three Languages. The Abbot of *Clugni* likewise, in a Letter he wrote to her, tells her she excell'd in Learning not only all her Sex, but the greatest part of Men †. And in the Calendar of the House of the *Paraclete*, she is recorded in these words: *Heloise, Mother and first Abbess of this Place, famous for her Learning and Religion.* I must not here pass by a Custom

* *Ego Petrus Cluniacensis Abbas, qui Pet. Abælardum in Monacum Cluniacensem recepi, & corpus ejus furtim delatum Heloissæ Abbatissæ & Monialibus Paracleti concessi, Authoritate omnipotentis Dei & omnium Sanctorum, absolvo eum pro officio ab omnibus peccatis suis.*

† *Studio tuo & Mulieres omnes vicisti, & pene viros universos superasti.* Abel. Op.

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the Religious of the *Paraclete* now have to commemorate how learned their firſt Abbeſs was in the *Greek*, which is, that every Year on the Day of Pentecoſt they perform divine Service in the *Greek* Tongue. What a ridiculous Vanity!

Francis D'Amboiſe tells us, how ſubtilly one Day ſhe ſatisfied St. *Bernard*, upon his aſking her, why in her Abbey when they recited the Lord's Prayer, they did not ſay, *Give us this Day our* DAILY *Bread*, but *Give us this Day our* SUPERSUBSTANTIAL *Bread*, by an Argument drawn from the Originals, affirming we ought to follow the *Greek* Verſion of the Goſpel St. *Matthew* wrote in *Hebrew*. Without doubt it was not a little ſurpriſing to St. *Bernard*, to hear a Woman oppoſe him in a Controverſy, by citing a *Greek* Text. 'Tis true, ſome Authors ſay *Abelard* made this Anſwer to St. *Bernard*, after hearing from *Heloiſe*, that Objections were made to that Form of Prayer. However the Caſe was, a Woman with a ſmall Competency of Learning, might in thoſe times paſs for a Miracle; and tho' ſhe might not equal thoſe Deſcriptions which have been given of her, yet ſhe may deſervedly be placed in the Rank of Women of the greateſt Learning. Nor was ſhe leſs remarkable for her Piety, Patience, and Reſignation, during her Sickneſſes in the latter part of her Life. She died the 17th of *May*, 1163. 'Tis ſaid ſhe deſired to be buried in the ſame Tomb with her *Abelard*, tho' that probably was not executed. *Francis D'Amboiſe* ſays, he ſaw at

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the Convent the Tombs of the Founder and Foundreſs near together. However, a Manuſcript of *Tours* give us an Account of an extraordinary Miracle which happened when *Abelard*'s Grave was opened for *Heloiſe*'s Body, namely, that *Abelard* ſtretched out his Arms to receive her, and embraced her cloſely; tho' there were twenty good Years paſs'd ſince he died. But that is a ſmall matter to a Writer of Miracles.

I ſhall conclude this Hiſtory with an Epitaph on *Abelard*, which the Abbot of *Clugni* ſent *Heloiſe*, and which is now to be read on his Tomb; it hath nothing in it delicate either for Thought or Language, and will ſcarcely bear a Tranſlation. It is only added here for the ſake of the Curious, and as an Inſtance of the Reſpect paid to the Memory of ſo great a Man, and one whom Envy had loaded with the greateſt Defamations.

PETRUS in hac petra latitat, quem mundus Homerum
Clamabat, ſed jam ſidera ſidus habent.
Sol erat hic Gallis, ſed eum jam fata tulerunt:
Ergo caret Regio Gallica Sole ſuo.
Ille ſciens quid quid fuit ulli ſciblie, vicit
Artifices, artes abſque docente docens.
Undecimæ Maij Petrum rapuere Calendæ,
Privantes Logices atria Rege ſuo.
Eſt ſatis, in tumulo Petrus hic jacit Abælardus,
Cui ſoli patuit ſcibile quid quid erat.

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GAllorum Socrates, Plato maximus Hesperiarum
Noster Aristoteles, Logicis (quicumque fuerunt)
Aut par aut melior; studiorum cognitus Orbi
Princeps, ingenio varius, subtilis & acer.
Omnia vi superans rationis & arte loquendi,
Abælardus erat. Sed nunc magis omnia vincit,
Cum Cluniacensem Monacum, moremque professus,
Ad Christi veram transivit Philosophiam,
In qua longævæ bene complens ultima vitæ,
Philosophis quandoque bonis se connumerandum
Spem dedit, undenas Maïo renovante Calendas.

LETTERS

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LETTERS

OF

ABELARD and HELOISE.

LETTER I.

ABELARD *to* PHILINTUS.

It may be proper to acquaint the Reader that the following Letter was written by Abelard *to a Friend to comfort him under some Afflictions which had befallen him, by a Recital of his own Sufferings, which had been much heavier. It contains a particular Account of his Amour with* Heloise, *and the unhappy Consequences of it. This Letter was written several Years after* Abelard's *Separation from* Heloise.

THE last time we were together, *Philintus*, you gave me a melancholy Account of your Misfortunes; I was sensibly touched with the Relation, and like a true Friend bore a Share in your Griefs. What did I not say to stop your Tears? I laid before you all the Reasons Philosophy could furnish, which I thought might any ways soften the Strokes of Fortune: But all these Endeavours have proved us[illegible]; Grief I perceive has wholly seized your S[illegible]s; and

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and your Prudence, far from assisting, seems quite to have forsaken you. But my skilful Friendship has found out an Expedient to relieve you. Attend to me a Moment, hear but the Story of my Misfortunes; and yours, *Philintus*, will be nothing, if you compare them with those of the loving and unhappy *Abelard*. Observe, I beseech you, at what Expence I endeavour to serve you; and think this no small Mark of my Affection; for I am going to present you with the Relation of such Particulars, as it is impossible for me to recollect without piercing my Heart with the most sensible Affliction.

You know the Place where I was born, but not perhaps that I was born with those complexional Faults which Strangers charge upon our Nation, an extreme Lightness of Temper, and great Inconstancy. I frankly own it, and shall be as free to acquaint you with those good Qualities which were observed in me. I had a natural Vivacity and Aptness for all the polite Arts. My Father was a Gentleman, and a Man of good Parts; he loved the Wars, but differ'd in his Sentiments from many who follow that Profession. He thought it no Praise to be illiterate; but in the Camp he knew how to converse at the same time with the Muses and *Bellona*. He was the same in the Management of his Family, and took equal Care to form his Children to the Study of Polite Learning, as to their Military Exercises. As I was his eldest, and consequently his favourite Son, took more than ordinary Care of my Education.

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cation. I had a natural Genius to Study, and made an extraordinary Progreſs in it. Smitten with the Love of Books, and the Praiſes which on all Sides were beſtowed upon me, I aſpired to no Reputation, but what proceeded from Learning. To my Brothers I left the Glory of Battles, and the Pomp of Triumphs; nay more, I yielded them up my Birth-right and Patrimony. I knew Neceſſity was the great Spur to Study, and was afraid I ſhould not merit the Title of Learned, if I diſtinguiſhed myſelf from others by nothing but a more plentiful Fortune. Of all the Sciences, *Logick* was the moſt to my Taſte. Such were the Arms I choſe to profeſs. Furniſhed with the Weapons of Reaſoning, I took Pleaſure in going to public Diſputations, to win Trophies; and wherever I heard that this Art flouriſhed, I ranged, like another *Alexander*, from Province to Province, to ſeek new Adverſaries, with whom I might try my Strength.

The Ambition I had to become formidable in Logick led me at laſt to *Paris*, the Center of Politeneſs, and where the Science I was ſo ſmitten with, had uſually been in the greateſt Perfection. I put myſelf under the Direction of one *Champeaux* a Profeſſor, who had acquired the Character of the moſt ſkilful Philoſopher of his Age, by negative Excellencies only, by being the leaſt Ignorant. He received me with great Demonſtrations of Kindneſs, but I was not ſo happy as to pleaſe him long: I was too knowing in the Subjects he diſcourſed upon; I often confuted his Notions; often

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in our Diſputations I puſhed a good Argument ſo home, that all his Subtilty was not able to elude its Force. It was impoſſible he ſhould ſee himſelf ſurpaſſed by his Scholar without Reſentment. It is ſometimes dangerous to have too much Merit.

Envy increaſed againſt me proportionably to my Reputation. My Enemies endeavoured to interrupt my Progreſs, but their Malice only provoked my Courage. And meaſuring my Abilities by the Jealouſy I had raiſed, I thought I had no farther Occaſion for *Champeaux*'s Lectures, but rather that I was ſufficiently qualified to read to others. I ſtood for a Place which was vacant at *Melun*. My Maſter uſed all his Artifice to defeat my Hopes, but in vain; and on this Occaſion, I triumphed over his Cunning, as before I had done over his Learning. My Lectures were always crouded, and my Beginnings ſo fortunate, that I entirely obſcured the Renown of my famous Maſter. Fluſhed with theſe happy Conqueſts, I removed to *Corbeil*, to attack the Maſters there, and ſo eſtabliſh my Character of the ableſt Logician. The Violence of Travelling threw me into a dangerous Diſtemper, and not being able to recover my Strength, my Phyſicians, who perhaps were in a League with *Champeaux*, adviſed me to remove to my Native Air. Thus I voluntarily baniſhed myſelf for ſome Years. I leave you to imagine whether my Abſence was not regretted by the better Sort. At length I recovered my Health, when I received News that my greateſt Adverſary had taken the Habit

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Habit of a Monk; you may think it was an Act of Penitence for having perſecuted me; quite contrary, 'twas Ambition; he reſolved to raiſe himſelf to ſome Church Dignity, therefore fell into the beaten Track, and took on him the Garb of feigned Auſterity; for this is the eaſieſt and ſhorteſt Way to the higheſt Eccleſiaſtical Dignities. His Wiſhes were ſucceſsful, and he obtained a Biſhoprick: Yet did he not quit *Paris*, and the Care of the Schools: He went to his Dioceſe to gather in his Revenues, but returned and paſſed the reſt of his Time in reading Lectures to thoſe few Pupils which followed him. After this I often engaged with him, and may reply to you as *Ajax* did to the *Greeks*;

If you demand the Fortune of that Day
When ſtaked on this right Hand your Honours lay,
If I did not oblige the Foe to yield,
Yet did I never baſely quit the Field.

About this Time my Father *Beranger*, who to the Age of Sixty had lived very agreeably, retired from the World, and ſhut himſelf up in a Cloiſter, where he offered up to Heaven the languid Remains of a Life he could make no farther uſe of. My Mother, who was yet young, took the ſame Reſolution. She turned a Religious, but did not entirely abandon the Satisfactions of Life. Her Friends were continually at the Grate. And the Monaſtery, when one has an Inclination to make it ſo, is exceeding charming and pleaſant. I was preſent

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ſent when my Mother was profeſſed. At my Return I reſolved to ſtudy Divinity, and inquired for a Director in that Study. I was recommended to one *Anſelm*, the very Oracle of his Time; but to give you my own Opinion, one more venerable for his Age and Wrinkles, than for his Genius or Learning. If you conſulted him upon any Difficulty, the ſure Conſequence was to be much more uncertain in the Point. They who only ſaw him admired him, but thoſe who reaſoned with him were extremely diſſatisfied. He was a great Maſter of Words, and talked much, but meant nothing. His Diſcourſe was a Fire, which inſtead of enlightening obſcured every thing with its Smoke; a Tree beautified with Variety of Leaves and Branches, but barren. I came to him with a Deſire to learn, but found him like the Fig-tree in the Goſpel, or the old Oak to which *Lucan* compares *Pompey*. I continued not long underneath his Shadow. I took for my Guides the Primitive Fathers, and boldly launched into the Ocean of the Holy Scriptures. In a ſhort Time I made ſuch a Progreſs, that others choſe me for their Director. The Number of my Scholars were incredible, and the Gratuities I received from them were anſwerable to the great Reputation I had acquired. Now I found myſelf ſafe in the Harbour, the Storms were paſſed, and the Rage of my Enemies had ſpent itſelf without Effect. Happy, had I known to make a right Uſe of this Calm! But when the Mind is moſt eaſy, 'tis moſt

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moſt expoſed to Love, and even Security here is the moſt dangerous State.

And now, my Friend, I am going to expoſe to you all my Weakneſſes. All Men, I believe, are under a Neceſſity of paying Tribute, at ſome Time or other, to Love, and it is vain to ſtrive to avoid it. I was a Philoſopher, yet this Tyrant of the Mind triumphed over all my Wiſdom; his Darts were of greater Force than all my Reaſoning, and with a ſweet Conſtraint he led me whither he pleaſed. Heaven, amidſt an Abundance of Bleſſings with which I was intoxicated, threw in a heavy Affliction. I became a moſt ſignal Example of its Vengeance; and the more unhappy, becauſe having deprived me of the Means of accompliſhing my Satisfaction, it left me to the Fury of my Criminal Deſires. I will tell you, my dear Friend, the Particulars of my Story, and leave you to judge whether I deſerved ſo ſevere a Correction.

I had always an Averſion for thoſe light Women, whom 'tis a Reproach to purſue; I was ambitious in my Choice, and wiſhed to find ſome Obſtacles, that I might ſurmount them with the greater Glory and Pleaſure.

There was in *Paris* a young Creature (ah *Philintus!*) formed in a Prodigality of Nature, to ſhew Mankind a finiſhed Compoſition; dear *Heloiſe!* the reputed Niece of one *Fulbert*, a Canon. Her Wit and her Beauty would have fired the dulleſt and moſt inſenſible Heart; and her Education was equally admirable. *Heloiſe* was a Miſtreſs of the moſt Polite Arts. You may eaſily imagine, that this did

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did not a little help to captivate me: I saw her, I loved her; I resolved to endeavour to engage her Affections. The Thirst of Glory cooled immediately in my Heart, and all my Passions were lost in this new one. I thought of nothing but *Heloise*; every thing brought her Image to my Mind. I was pensive, restless, and my Passion was so violent as to admit of no Restraint. I was always vain and presumptive; I flattered myself already with the most bewitching Hopes. My Reputation had spread itself everywhere; and could a virtuous Lady resist a Man that had confounded all the Learned of the Age? I was young—could she shew an Insensibility to those Vows which my Heart never formed for any but herself? My Person was advantageous enough, and by my Dress no one would have suspected me for a Doctor; and Dress, you know, is not a little engaging with Women. Besides, I had Wit enough to write a *Billet-doux*, and hoped, if ever she permitted my absent self to entertain her, she would read with Pleasure those Breathings of my Heart.

Filled with these Notions I thought of nothing but the Means to speak to her. Love has either find or make all Things easy. By the Offices of common Friends, I gained the Acquaintance of *Fulbert*. And can you believe it, *Philintus*, he allowed me the Privilege of his Table, and an Apartment in his House: I paid him indeed a considerable Sum, for Persons of his Character do nothing without Money. But what would I not have given? You, my dear Friend,

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Friend, know what Love is; imagine then what a Pleasure it must have been to a Heart so inflamed as mine, to be always so near the dear Object of Desire! I would not have exchanged my happy Condition for that of the greatest Monarch upon Earth. I saw *Heloise*, I spoke to her,—each Action, each confused Look, told her the Trouble of my Soul. And she, on the other Side, gave me Ground to hope for every thing from her Generosity. *Fulbert* desired me to instruct her in Philosophy; by this Means I found Opportunities of being in private with her, and yet I was sure of all Men the most timorous in declaring my Passion.

As I was with her one Day alone, Charming *Heloise*, said I blushing, if you know yourself, you will not be surprised with that Passion you have inspired me with. Uncommon as it is, I can express it but with the common Terms——I love you, adorable *Heloise!* 'Till now I thought Philosophy made us Masters of all our Passions, and that it was a Refuge from the Storms in which weak Mortals are tossed and shipwrecked: But you have destroyed my Security, and broken this Philosophic Courage. I have despised Riches; Honour and its Pageantries could never raise a weak Thought in me: Beauty alone has fired my Soul; happy if she who raised this Passion, kindly receives the Declaration; but if it is an Offence—No, replied *Heloise*; she must be very ignorant of your Merit, who can be offended at your Passion. But for my own Repose, I wish either that

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that you had not made this Declaration, or that I were at Liberty not to ſuſpect your Sincerity. Ah divine *Heloiſe*, ſaid I, flinging myſelf at her Feet, I ſwear by yourſelf—I was going on to convince her of the Truth of my Paſſion, but heard a Noiſe, and it was *Fulbert*: There was no avoiding it, but I muſt do a Violence to my Deſire, and change the Diſcourſe to ſome other Subject. After this, I found frequent Opportunities to free *Heloiſe* from thoſe Suſpicions, which the general Inſincerity of Men had raiſed in her; and ſhe too much deſired what I ſaid were Truth, not to believe it. Thus there was a moſt happy Underſtanding between us. The ſame Houſe, the ſame Love, united our Perſons and our Deſires. How many ſoft Moments did we paſs together? We took all Opportunities to expreſs to each other our mutual Affections, and were ingenious in contriving Incidents which might give us a plauſible Occaſion of meeting. *Pyramus* and *Thiſbe*'s Diſcovery of the Crack in the Wall, was but a ſlight Repreſentation of our Love and its Sagacity. In the Dead of Night, when *Fulbert* and his Domeſticks were in a ſound Sleep, we improved the Time, proper to the ſweet Theſts of Love: Not contenting ourſelves, like thoſe unfortunate Lovers, with give inſipid Kiſſes to a Wall, we made uſe of all the Moments of our charming Interviews. In the Place where we met we had no Lions to fear, and the Study of Philoſophy ſerved us for a Blind. But I was ſo far from making any Advances in the Sciences, that I loſt

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loſt all my Taſte of them; and when I was obliged to go from the Sight of my dear Miſtreſs to my philoſophical Exerciſes, 'twas with the utmoſt Regret and Melancholy. Love is incapable of being concealed; a Word, a Look, nay Silence ſpeaks it. My Scholars diſcovered it firſt; they ſaw I had no longer that Vivacity of Thought to which all Things were eaſy: I could now do nothing but write Verſes to ſooth my Paſſion: I quitted *Ariſtotle* and his dry Maxims, to practiſe the Precepts of the more ingenious *Ovid*. No Day paſſed in which I did not compoſe amorous Verſes. Love was my inſpiring *Apollo*. My Songs were ſpread abroad, and gained me frequent Applauſes. Thoſe who were in Love as I was, took a Pride in learning them; and by luckily applying my Thoughts and Verſes, have obtained Favours, which perhaps they could not otherwiſe have gained: This gave our Amours ſuch an *Eclat*, that the Loves of *Heloiſe* and *Abelard* were the Subject of all Converſations.

The Town-talk at laſt reached *Fulbert*'s Ears; it was with great Difficulty he gave Credit to what he heard, for he loved his Niece, and was prejudiced in my Favour; but upon cloſer Examination, he began to be leſs incredulous. He ſurpriſed us in one of our more ſoft Converſations. How fatal ſometimes are the Conſequences of Curioſity! The Anger of *Fulbert* ſeemed too moderate on this Occaſion, and I feared in the End ſome more heavy Revenge. It is impoſſible to expreſs the Grief and Regret which filled my Soul, when I was obliged

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obliged to leave the Canon's Houſe and my dear *Heloiſe*. But this Separation of our Perſons the more firmly united our Minds; and the deſperate Condition we were reduced to, made us capable of attempting any thing.

My Intrigues give me but little Shame, ſo lovingly did I eſteem the Occaſion: Think what the gay young Divinities ſaid, when *Vulcan* caught *Mars* and the Goddeſs of Beauty in his Net, and impute it all to me. *Fulbert* ſurpriſed me with *Heloiſe*, and what Man that had a Soul in him would not have borne any Ignominy on the ſame Conditions? The next Day I provided myſelf of a private Lodging near the loved Houſe, being reſolved not to abandon my Prey. I continued ſome Time without appearing publickly. Ah how long did thoſe few Moments ſeem to me! When we fall from a State of Happineſs, with what Impatience do we bear our Misfortunes!

It being impoſſible that I could live without ſeeing *Heloiſe*, I endeavoured to engage her Servant, whoſe name was *Agaton*, in my Intereſt: She was brown, well ſhaped, of a Perſon ſuperior to the ordinary Rank; her Features regular, and her Eyes ſparkling; fit to raiſe Love in any Man whoſe Heart was not prepoſſeſſed by another Paſſion. I met her alone, and entreated her to have Pity on a diſtreſſed Lover. She anſwered, ſhe would undertake any thing to ſerve me, but there was a Reward——At theſe Words I opened my Purſe, and ſhewed the ſhining Metal, which lays aſleep Guards, forces a Way through Rocks,

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Rocks, and ſoftens the Hearts of the moſt obdurate Fair. You are miſtaken, ſaid ſhe, ſmiling and ſhaking her Head—you do not know me; could Gold tempt me, a rich Abbot takes his nightly Station, and ſings under my Window; he offers to ſend me to his Abbey, which, he ſays, is ſituate in the moſt pleaſant Country in the World. A Courtier offers me a conſiderable Sum of Money, and aſſures me I need have no Apprehenſions; for if our Amours have Conſequences, he will marry me to his Gentleman, and give him a handſome Employment. To ſay nothing of a young Officer, who patroles about here every Night, and makes his Attacks after all imaginable Forms. It muſt be Love only which could oblige him to follow me; for I have not, like your great Ladies, any Rings or Jewels to tempt him: Yet during all his Siege of Love, his Feather and his embroidered Coat have not made any Breach in my Heart; I ſhall not quickly he brought to capitulate, I am too faithful to my firſt Conqueror—and then ſhe looked earneſtly on me. I anſwered, I did not underſtand her Diſcourſe. She replied, For a Man of Senſe and Gallantry, you have a very ſlow Apprehenſion; I am in Love with you, *Abelard*; I know you adore *Heloiſe*, I do not blame you; I deſire only to enjoy the ſecond Place in your Affections; I have a tender Heart, as well as my Miſtreſs; you may without Difficulty make Returns to my Paſſion; do not perplex yourſelf with unfaſhionable Scruples: A prudent Man ought to love

ſeveral

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ſeveral at the ſame Time; if one ſhould fail, he is not then left unprovided.

You cannot imagine, *Philintus*, how much I was ſurpriſed at theſe Words; ſo entirely did I love *Heloiſe*, that without reflecting whether *Agaton* ſpoke any thing reaſonable or not, I immediately left her. When I had gone a little Way from her, I looked back, and ſaw her biting her Nails in the Rage of Diſappointment, which made me fear ſome fatal Conſequences. She haſtened to *Fulbert*, and told him the Offer I had made her, but I ſuppoſe concealed the other Part of the Story. The Canon never forgave this Affront; I afterwards perceived he was more deeply concerned for his Niece, than I at firſt imagined. Let no Lover hereafter follow my Example: A Woman rejected is an outrageous Creature. *Agaton* was Day and Night at her Window, on purpoſe to keep me at Diſtance from her Miſtreſs, and ſo gave her own Gallants Opportunity enough to diſplay their ſeveral Abilities.

I was infinitely perplexed what Courſe to take; at laſt I applied myſelf to my *Heloiſe*'s Singing-maſter. The ſhining Metal, which had no Effect on *Agaton*, charmed him; he was excellently qualified for conveying a Billet, with the greateſt Dexterity and Secrecy. He delivered one of mine to *Heloiſe*, who, according to my Appointment, was ready at the End of a Garden, the Wall of which I ſcaled by a Ladder of Ropes. I confeſs to you all my Failings, *Philintus*. How would my Enemies, *Cham-*

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Champeaux and *Anſelm*, have triumphed, had they ſeen the redoubted Philoſopher in ſuch a wretched Condition? Well—I met my Soul's Joy, my *Heloiſe*; I ſhall not deſcribe our Tranſports, they were not long; for the firſt News *Heloiſe* acquainted me with, plunged me in a thouſand Diſtractions. A floating *Delos* was to be ſought for, where ſhe might be ſafely delivered of a Burthen ſhe began already to feel. Without loſing much Time in debating, I made her preſently quit the Canon's Houſe, and at Break of Day depart for *Britany*; where ſhe, like another Goddeſs, gave the World another *Apollo*, which my Siſter took Care of.

This carrying off *Heloiſe* was ſufficient Revenge upon *Fulbert*. It filled him with the deepeſt Concern, and had like to have deprived him of all the little Share of Wit which Heaven had allowed him. His Sorrow and Lamentation gave the Cenſorious an Occaſion of ſuſpecting him for ſomething more than the Uncle of *Heloiſe*.

In ſhort, I began to pity his Misfortune, and think this Robbery which Love had made me commit was a Sort of Treaſon. I endeavoured to appeaſe his Anger by a ſincere Confeſſion of all that was paſt, and by hearty Engagements to marry *Heloiſe* ſecretly. He gave me his Conſent, and with many Proteſtations and Embraces confirmed our Reconciliation. But what Dependence can be made on the Word of an ignorant *Devotee*. He was only plotting a cruel Revenge, as you will ſee by what follows.

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I took a Journey into *Britany*, in order to bring back my dear *Heloiſe*, whom I now conſidered as my Wife. When I had acquainted her with what paſſed between the Canon and me, I found ſhe was of a contrary Opinion to me. She urged all that was poſſible to divert me from Marriage: That it was a Bond always fatal to a Philoſopher; that the Cries of Children and Cares of a Family were utterly inconſiſtent with the Tranquillity and Application which the Study of Philoſophy required. She quoted to me all that was written on the Subject by *Theophraſtus*, *Cicero*, and above all inſiſted on the unfortunate *Socrates*, who quitted Life with Joy, becauſe by that Means he left *Xantippe*. Will it not be more agreeable to me, ſaid ſhe, to ſee myſelf your Miſtreſs than your Wife? And will not Love have more Power than Marriage to keep our Hearts firmly united? Pleaſures taſted ſparingly, and with Difficulty, have always a higher Reliſh, while every thing, by being eaſy and common, grows flat and inſipid.

I was unmoved by all this Reaſoning. *Heloiſe* prevailed upon my Siſter to engage me. *Lucilla* (for that was her Name) taking me aſide one Day ſaid, What do you intend, Brother? Is it poſſible that *Abelard* ſhould in earneſt think of marrying *Heloiſe*? She ſeems indeed to deſerve a perpetual Affection; Beauty, Youth and Learning, all that can make a Perſon valuable, meet in her. You may adore all this if you pleaſe; but not to flatter you, What is Beauty but a Flower, which may be

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be blasted by the least Fit of Sickness? When those Features, with which you have been so captivated, shall be sunk, and those Graces lost, you will too late repent that you have entangled yourself in a Chain, from which Death only can free you. I shall see you reduced to the married Man's only Hope of Survivorship. Do you think Learning ought to make *Heloise* more amiable? I know she is not one of those affected Females, who are continually oppressing you with fine Speeches, criticising Books, and deciding upon the Merit of Authors. When such a one is in the Fury of her Discourse, Husband, Friends, Servants, all fly before her. *Heloise* has not this Fault; yet 'tis troublesome not to be at Liberty to use the least improper Expression before a Wife, which you bear with Pleasure from a Mistress.

But you say you are sure of the Affections of *Heloise*; I believe it; she has given you no ordinary Proofs. But can you be sure Marriage will not be the Tomb of her Love? The Name of Husband and Master are always harsh, and *Heloise* will not be the *Phœnix* you now think her. Will she not be a Woman? Come, come, the Head of a Philosopher is less secure than those of other Men. My Sister grew warm in the Argument, and was going on to give me a hundred more Reasons of this Kind; but I angrily interrupted her, telling her only, that she did not know *Heloise*.

A few Days after we departed together

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from *Britany*, and came to *Paris*, where I compleated my Project. 'Twas my Intent my Marriage ſhould be kept ſecret, and therefore *Heloiſe* retired among the Nuns of *Argenteuil*.

I now thought *Fulbert*'s Anger diſarmed; I lived in Peace; but alas! our Marriage proved but a weak Defence againſt his Revenge. Obſerve, *Philintus*, to what a Barbarity he purſued it! He bribed my Servants; an Aſſaſſin came into my Bedchamber by Night with a Razor in his Hand, and found me in a deep Sleep. I ſuffered the moſt ſhameful Puniſhment that the Revenge of an Enemy could invent; in ſhort, without loſing my Life, I loſt my Manhood. I was puniſhed indeed in the offending Part; the Deſire was left me, but not the Poſſibility of ſatisfying the Paſſion. So cruel an Action eſcaped not unpuniſhed; the Villain ſuffered the ſame Infliction; poor Comfort for ſo irretrievable an Evil! I confeſs to you, Shame more than any ſincere Penitence made me reſolve to hide myſelf from my *Heloiſe*. Jealouſy took Poſſeſſion of my Mind; at the very Expence of her Happineſs I decreed to diſappoint all Rivals: Before I put myſelf in a Cloyſter, I obliged her to take the Habit, and retire into the Nunnery of *Argenteuil*. I remember ſomebody would have oppoſed her making ſuch a cruel Sacrifice of herſelf, but ſhe anſwered in the Words of *Cornelia* after the Death of *Pompey* the Great;

O Conjux

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—— O Conjux, ego te ſcelerata peremi.
— Te fata extrema petente
Vita digna fui? Moriar——&c.

O my lov'd Lord! our fatal Marriage draws
On thee this Doom, and I the guilty Cauſe!
Then whilſt thou go'ſt th' Extremes of Fate to prove,
I'll ſhare that Fate, and expiate thus my Love.

Speaking theſe Verſes, ſhe marched up to the Altar, and took the Veil with a Conſtancy which I could not have expected in a Woman who had ſo high a Taſte of Pleaſures which ſhe might ſtill enjoy. I bluſhed at my own Weakneſs, and without deliberating a Moment longer, I buried myſelf in a Cloyſter, reſolved to vanquiſh a fruitleſs Paſſion. I now reflected that God had chaſtiſed me thus grievouſly, that he might ſave me from that Deſtruction in which I had like to have been ſwallowed up. In order to avoid Idleneſs, the unhappy Incendiary of thoſe criminal Flames which had ruined me in the World, I endeavoured in my Retirement to put thoſe Talents to a good Uſe which I had before ſo much abuſed. I gave the Novices Rules of Divinity agreeable to the Holy Fathers and Councils. In the mean while the Enemies which my new Fame had raiſed up, and eſpecially *Alberic* and *Lotulf*, who, after the Death of their Maſters *Champeaux* and *Anſelm*, aſſumed the Sovereignty of Learning, began to attack me. They loaded me with the falſeſt Imputations, and notwithſtanding all my Defence, I had the

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Mortification to see my Books condemned by a Council, and burnt. This was a cutting Sorrow, and believe me, *Philintus*, the former Calamity I suffered by the Cruelty of *Fulbert*, was nothing in Comparison to this.

The Affront I had newly received, and the scandalous Debaucheries of the Monks, obliged me to banish myself, and retire near to *Nogent*. I lived in a Desart, where I flattered myself I should avoid Fame, and be secure from the Malice of my Enemies. I was again deceived. The Desire of being taught by me, drew Crowds of Auditors even thither. Many left the Towns and their Houses, and came and lived in Tents; for Herbs, coarse Fare, and hard Lodging, they abandoned the Delicacies of a plentiful Table and easy Life. I looked like a Prophet in the Wilderness attended by his Disciples. My Lectures were perfectly clear from all that had been condemned. And happy had it been if our Soitude had been inaccessible to Envy! With the considerable Gratuities I received, I built a Chapel, and dedicated it to the Holy Ghost, by the Name of the *Paraclete*. The Rage of my Enemies now awakened again, and forced me to quit this Retreat. This I did without much Difficulty. But first the Bishop of *Troies* gave me leave to establish there a Nunnery, which I did, and committed the Care of it to my dear *Heloise*. When I had settled her here, can you believe it, *Philintus*, I left her, without taking any Leave. I did not wander long without any settled Habitation; for the

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St Gildas
Abelard
to
Eloisa

the Duke of *Britany*, informed of my Misfortunes, named me to the Abbey of St. *Guildas*, where I now am, and where I now ſuffer every Day freſh Perſecutions.

I live in a barbarous Country, the Language of which I don't underſtand; I have no Converſation but with the rudeſt People. My Walks are on the inacceſſible Shore of a Sea, which is perpetually ſtormy. My Monks are are only known by their Diſſoluteneſs, and living without Rule or Order. Could you ſee the Abbey, *Philintus*, you would not call it one. The Doors and Walls are without any Ornament, except the Heads of Wild Boars and Hinds Feet, which are nailed up againſt them, and the Hides of frightful Animals. The Cells are hung with the Skins of Deer. The Monks have not ſo much as a Bell to wake them; the Cocks and Dogs ſupply that Defect. In ſhort, they paſs their whole Days in Hunting; would to Heaven that were their greateſt Fault! or that their Pleaſures terminated there! I endeavour in vain to recal them to their Duty; they all combine againſt me, and I only expoſe myſelf to continual Vexations and Dangers. I imagine I ſee every Moment a naked Sword hang over my Head. Sometimes they ſurround me, and load me with infinite Abuſes; ſometimes they abandon me, and I am left alone to my own tormenting Thoughts. I make it my Endeavour to merit by my Sufferings, and to appeaſe an angry God. Sometimes I grieve for the Loſs of the Houſe of the *Paraclete*, and wiſh to ſee it again. Ah *Philintus!*

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lintus! does not the Love of *Heloiſe* ſtill burn in my Heart? I have not yet triumphed over that unhappy Paſſion. In the midſt of Retirement I ſigh, I weep, I pine, I ſpeak the dear Name of *Heloiſe*, and pleaſed to hear the Sound, I complain of the Severity of Heaven. But oh! let us not deceive ourſelves: I have not made a right Uſe of Grace. I am thoroughly wretched. I have not yet torn from my Heart the deep Roots which Vice has planted in it. For if my Converſion were ſincere, how could I take a Pleaſure to relate my paſt Follies? Could I not more eaſily comfort myſelf in my Afflictions, could I not turn to my Advantage thoſe Words of God himſelf, *If they have perſecuted me they will alſo perſecute you; if the World hate you, ye know that it hated me alſo?* Come, *Philintus*, let us make a ſtrong Effort, turn our Misfortunes to our Advantage, make them meritorious, or at leaſt wipe out our Offences, let us receive without Murmuring what comes from the Hand of God, and let us not not oppoſe our Will to his. Adieu. I give you Advice which could I myſelf follow, I ſhould be happy.

LETTER

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LETTER II.

HELOISE *to* ABELARD.

The foregoing Letter would probably not have produced any others, if it had been delivered to the Perſon to whom it was directed; but falling by Accident into Heloiſe's *Hands, who knew the Character, ſhe opened it, and read it; and, by that means, her former Paſſion being awakened, ſhe immediately ſet herſelf to write to her Huſband, as follows.*

* *To her Lord, her Father; her Huſband, her Brother; his Servant, his Child; his Wife, his Siſter; and to expreſs all that is Humble, Reſpectful, and Loving, to her* Abelard Heloiſe *writes this.*

A Conſolatory Letter of yours to a Friend, happened ſome Days ſince to fall into my Hands; my Knowledge of the Character, and my Love of the Hand, ſoon gave me the Curioſity to open it: In Juſtification of the Liberty I took, I flattered myſelf I might claim a Sovereign Privilege over every thing which came from you: Nor was I ſcrupulous to break through the Rules of good Breeding, when it was

* *Domino ſuo, imo Patri; Conjugi ſuo, imo Fratri; Ancilla ſua, imo Filia; ipſius Uxor, imo Soror; Abælardo Heloiſſa,* &c. Abel. Oper.

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was to hear News of *Abelard:* But how dear did my Curiosity cost me? What Disturbance did it occasion? And how was I surprised to find the whole Letter filled with a particular and melancholy Account of our Misfortunes? I met with my Name a hundred Times; I never saw it without Fear; some heavy Calamity always followed it: I saw yours too, equally unhappy. These mournful, but dear Remembrances, put my Spirits into such a violent Motion, that I thought it was too much to offer Comfort to a Friend for a few slight Disgraces, by such extraordinary Means as the Representations of our Sufferings and Revolutions. What Reflections did I not make? I began to consider the whole afresh, and perceived myself pressed with the same Weight of Grief as when we first began to be miserable. Though Length of Time ought to have closed up my Wounds, yet the seeing them described by your Hand was sufficient to make them all open and bleed afresh. Nothing can ever blot from my Memory what you have suffered in Defence of your Writings. I cannot help thinking of the rancorous Malice of *Alberic* and *Lotulf.* A cruel Uncle, and an injured Lover, will be always present to my aking Sight. I shall never forget what Enemies your Learning, and what Envy your Glory raised against you. I shall never forget your Reputation, so justly acquired, torn to pieces, and blasted by the inexorable Cruelty of half-learned Pretenders to Science. Was not your Treatise of Divinity condemned to be burnt? Were

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Were you not threatened with perpetual Imprisonment? In vain you urged in your Defence, that your Enemies impoſed on you Opinions quite different from your Meaning: In vain you condemned thoſe Opinions; all was of no Effect towards your Juſtification; 'twas reſolved you ſhould be a Heretick. What did not thoſe two falſe Prophets * accuſe you of, who declaimed ſo ſeverely againſt you before the Council of *Sens?* What Scandals were vented on occaſion of the Name *Paraclete* given to your Chapel? What a Storm was raiſed againſt you by the treacherous Monks, when you did them the Honour to be called their Brother? This Hiſtory of our numerous Misfortunes, related in ſo true and moving a Manner, made my Heart bleed within me: My Tears, which I could not reſtrain, have blotted half your Letter; I wiſh they had effaced the whole, and that I had returned it to you in that Condition: I ſhould then have been ſatisfied with the little Time I kept it; but it was demanded of me too ſoon.

I muſt confeſs I was much eaſier in my Mind before I read your Letter. Sure all the Misfortunes of Lovers are conveyed to them thro' their Eyes. Upon reading your Letter, I felt all mine renewed. I reproached myſelf for having been ſo long without venting my Sorrows, when the Rage of our unrelenting Enemies ſtill burns with the ſame Fury. Since Length of Time, which diſarms the ſtrongeſt Hatred, ſeems but to aggravate theirs; ſince it is

* *St.* Bernard *and St.* Norbert.

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is decreed that your Virtue ſhall be perſecuted 'till it takes refuge in the Grave, and even beyond that, your Aſhes perhaps will not be ſuffered to reſt in Peace; Let me always meditate on your Calamities, let me publiſh them thro' all the World, if poſſible, to ſhame an Age that has not known how to value you. I will ſpare no one, ſince no one would intereſt himſelf to protect you, and your Enemies are never weary of oppreſſing your Innocence. Alas! my Memory is perpetually filled with bitter Remembrances of paſt Evils, and are there more to be feared ſtill? Shall my *Abelard* be never mentioned without Tears? Shall the dear Name be never ſpoken but with Sighs? Obſerve, I beſeech you, to what a wretched Condition you have reduced me: Sad, afflicted, without any poſſible Comfort, unleſs it proceed from you. Be not then unkind, nor deny, I beg you, that little Relief which you only can give. Let me have a faithful Account of all that concerns you. I would know every thing, be it ever ſo unfortunate. Perhaps, by mingling my Sighs with yours, I may make your Sufferings leſs; if that Obſervation be true, that all Sorrows divided are made lighter.

Tell me not, by way of Excuſe, you will ſpare our Tears; the Tears of Women ſhut in a melancholy Place, and devoted to Penitence, are not to be ſpared. And if you wait for an Opportunity to write pleaſant and agreeable Things to us, you will delay writing too long: Proſperity ſeldom chuſes the Side of the Virtuous; and Fortune is ſo blind, that in a Crowd, in

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in which there is perhaps but one wife and brave Man, it is not to be expected ſhe ſhould ſingle him out. Write to me then immediately, and wait not for Miracles; they are too ſcarce, and we too much accuſtomed to Misfortunes to expect any happy turn. I ſhall always have this, if you pleaſe, and this will be always agreeable to me, that when I receive any Letters from you, I ſhall know you ſtill remember me. *Seneca*, (with whoſe Writings you made me acquainted) as much a Stoic as he was, ſeemed to be ſo very ſenſible of this kind of Pleaſure, that upon opening any Letters from *Lucilius*, he imagined he felt the ſame Delight as when they converſed together. I have made it an Obſervation ſince our Abſence, that we are much fonder of the Pictures of thoſe we love, when they are at a great Diſtance, than when they are near to us. It ſeems to me, as if the farther they are removed, their Pictures grow the more finiſhed, and acquire a great Reſemblance: at leaſt our Imagination, which perpetually figures them to us by the Deſire we have of ſeeing them again, makes us think ſo. By a peculiar Power, Love can make that ſeem Life itſelf, which, as ſoon as the loved Object returns, is nothing but a little Canvas and dead Colours. I have your Picture in my Room, I never paſs by it without ſtopping to look at it; and yet when you were preſent with me, I ſcarce ever caſt my Eyes upon it. If a Picture, which is but a mute Repreſentation of an Object, can give ſuch Pleaſure, what cannot Letters inſpire? They have

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have Souls, they can ſpeak, they have in them all that Force which expreſſes the Tranſports of the Heart; they have all the Fire of our Paſſions, they can raiſe them as much as if the Perſons themſelves were preſent; they have all the Softneſs and Delicacy of Speech, and ſometimes a Boldneſs of Expreſſion even beyond it.

We may write to each other; ſo innocent a Pleaſure is not forbidden us. Let us not loſe, through Negligence, the only Happineſs which is left us, and the only one perhaps which the Malice of our Enemies can never raviſh from us. I ſhall read that you are my Huſband, and you ſhall ſee me addreſs you as a Wife. In ſpite of all your Misfortunes, you may be what you pleaſe in your Letter. Letters were firſt invented for comforting ſuch ſolitary Wretches as myſelf. Having loſt the ſubſtantial Pleaſures of ſeeing and poſſeſſing you, I ſhall in ſome meaſure compenſate this Loſs, by the Satisfaction I ſhall find in your Writing. There I ſhall read your moſt ſecret Thoughts; I ſhall carry them always about me, I ſhall kiſs them every Moment; if you can be capable of any Jealouſy, let it be for the fond Careſſes I ſhall beſtow on your Letters, and envy only the Happineſs of thoſe Rivals. That Writing may be no Trouble to you, write always to me careleſly, and without Study: I had rather read the Dictates of the Heart than of the Brain. I cannot live, if you do not tell me you always love me; but that Language ought to be ſo natural to you, that I believe you cannot ſpeak otherwiſe to me, without great Violence to

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yourſelf. And ſince, by that melancholy Relation to your Friend, you have awakened all my Sorrows, it is but reaſonable you ſhould allay them by ſome Marks of an inviolable Love.

I do not however reproach you for the innocent Artifice you made uſe of to comfort a Perſon in Affliction, by comparing his Misfortune to another much greater. Charity is ingenious in finding out ſuch pious Artifices, and to be commended for uſing them. But do you owe nothing more to us than to that Friend, be the Friendſhip between you ever ſo intimate? We are called your Siſters; we call ourſelves your Children; and if it were poſſible to think of any Expreſſions which could ſignify a dearer Relation, or a more affectionate Regard and mutual Obligation between us, we would uſe them: If we could be ſo ungrateful as not to ſpeak our juſt Acknowledgments to you, this Church, theſe Altars, theſe Walls, would reproach our Silence and ſpeak for us. But without leaving it to that, it will be always a Pleaſure to me to ſay, that you only are the Founder of this Houſe; it is wholly your Work. You, by inhabiting here, have given Fame and Sanction to a Place, known before only for Robberies and Murders. You have in the literal Senſe made the Den of Thieves a Houſe of Prayer. Theſe Cloyſters owe nothing to publick Charities; our Walls were not raiſed by the Uſury of Publicans, nor their Foundations laid in baſe Extortion. The God whom we ſerve, ſees nothing but innocent Riches,

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Riches, and harmleſs Votaries, whom you have placed here. Whatever this young Vineyard is, is owing all to you; and it is your Part to employ your whole Care to cultivate and improve it; this ought to be one of the principal Affairs of your Life. Though our holy Renunciation, our Vows, and our manner of Life ſeem to ſecure us from all Temptations; though our Walls and Grates prohibit all Approaches, yet 'tis the Outſide only, the Bark of the Tree, is covered from Injuries: while the Sap of Original Corruption may imperceptibly ſpread within, even to the Heart, and prove fatal to the moſt promiſing Plantation, unleſs continual Care be taken to cultivate and ſecure it. Virtue in us is grafted upon Nature and the Woman; the one is weak, and the other is always changeable. To plant the Lord's Vine is a Work of no little Labour: and after it is planted it will require great Application and Diligence to manure it. The Apoſtle of the Gentiles, as great a Labourer as he was, ſays, he hath planted, and *Apollos* hath watered, but 'tis God that gives the Increaſe. *Paul* had planted the Goſpel among the *Corinthians*, by his holy and earneſt Preaching; *Apollos*, a zealous Diſciple of that great Maſter, continued to cultivate it by frequent Exhortations; and the Grace of God, which their conſtant Prayers implored for that Church, made the Endeavours of both ſucceſsful.

This ought to be an Example for your Conduct towards us. I know you are not ſlothful; yet your Labours are not directed to us; your Cares

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Cares are waſted upon a Set of Men whoſe Thoughts are only earthly, and you refuſe to reach out your Hand to ſupport thoſe who are weak and ſtaggering, in their Way to Heaven, and who with all their Endeavours can ſcarcely preſerve themſelves from falling. You fling the Pearls of the Goſpel before Swine, when you ſpeak to thoſe who are filled with the good Things of this World, and nouriſhed with the Fatneſs of the Earth; and you neglect the innocent Sheep, who, tender as they are, would yet follow you through Deſarts and Mountains. Why are ſuch Pains thrown away upon the ungrateful, while not a Thought is beſtowed upon your Children, whoſe Souls would be filled with a Senſe of your Goodneſs? But why ſhould I intreat you in the Name of your Children? Is it poſſible I ſhould fear obtaining any thing of you, when I aſk it in my own Name? And muſt I uſe any other Prayers than my own, to prevail upon you? The St. *Auſtins*, *Tertullians*, and *Jeromes*, have wrote to the *Eudoxas*, *Paulas* and *Melanias*; and can you read thoſe Names, though of Saints, and not remember mine? Can it be criminal for you to imitate St. *Jerome*, and diſcourſe with me concerning the Scripture; or *Tertullian*, and preach Mortification; or St. *Auſtin*, and explain to me the Nature of Grace? Why ſhould I only reap no Advantage from your Learning? When you write to me, you will write to your Wife. Marriage has made ſuch a Correſpondence lawful; and ſince you can, without giving the leaſt Scandal, ſatisfy me, why

why will you not? I am not only engaged by my Vows, which might poſſibly be ſometimes neglected; but I have a barbarous Uncle, whoſe Inhumanity is a Security againſt any criminal Deſire, which Tenderneſs and the Remembrance of our paſt Enjoyments might inſpire. There is nothing that can cauſe you any Fear; you need not fly to conquer. You may ſee me, hear my Sighs, and be a Witneſs of all my Sorrows, without incurring any Danger, ſince you can only relieve me with Tears and Words. If I have put myſelf into a Cloyſter with Reaſon, perſuade me to continue in it with Devotion: You have been the Occaſion of all my Misfortune; you therefore muſt be the Inſtrument of all my Comfort.

You cannot but remember, (for what do not Lovers remember?) with what Pleaſure I have paſt whole Days in hearing you diſcourſe. How when you were abſent I ſhut myſelf from every one to write to you; how uneaſy I was, till my Letter had come to your Hands; what artful Management it required to engage Confidents. This Detail perhaps ſurpriſes you, and you are in Pain for what will follow. But I am no longer aſhamed, that my Paſſion has had no Bounds for you; for I have done more than all this. I have hated myſelf that I might love you; I came hither to ruin myſelf in a perpetual Impriſonment, that I might make you live quiet and eaſy. Nothing but Virtue, joined to a Love perfectly diſengaged from the Commerce of the Senſes, could have produced ſuch Effects. Vice never inſpires any thing like

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like this, it is too much enſlaved to the Body. When we love Pleaſures, we love the living and not the dead. We leave off burning with Deſire, for thoſe who can no longer burn for us. This was my cruel Uncle's Notion; he meaſured my Virtue by the Frailty of my Sex, and thought it was the Man, and not the Perſon, I loved. But he has been guilty to no Purpoſe. I love you more than ever, and to revenge myſelf of him, I will ſtill love you with all the Tenderneſs of my Soul till the laſt Moment of my Life. If formerly my Affection for you was not ſo pure, if in thoſe Days the Mind and the Body ſhared in the Pleaſure of loving you, I often told you even then, that I was more pleaſed with poſſeſſing your Heart, than with any other Happineſs, and the Man was the Thing I leaſt valued in you.

You cannot but be entirely perſuaded of this, by the extreme Unwillingneſs I ſhewed to marry you; though I knew that the Name of Wife was honourable in the World, and holy in Religion, yet the Name of your Miſtreſs had greater Charms, becauſe it was more free. The Bonds of Matrimony, however honourable, ſtill bear with them a neceſſary Engagement. And I was very unwilling to be neceſſitated to love always a Man who perhaps would not always love me. I deſpiſed the Name of Wife, that I might live happy with that of Miſtreſs; and I find by your Letter to your Friend, you have not forgot that Delicacy of Paſſion in a Woman who loved you always with the utmoſt Tenderneſs; and

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and yet wiſhed to love you more. You have very juſtly obſerved in your Letter, that I eſteemed thoſe publick Engagements inſipid, which form Alliances only to be diſſolved by Death, and which put Life and Love under the ſame unhappy Neceſſity. But you have not added how often I have made Proteſtations that it was infinitely preferable to me to live with *Abelard* as his Miſtreſs, than with any other as Empreſs of the World, and that I was more happy in obeying you, than I ſhould have been in lawfully captivating the Lord of the Univerſe. Riches and Pomp are not the Charms of Love. True Tenderneſs make us ſeparate the Lover from all that is external to him, and ſetting aſide his Quality, Fortune and Employments, conſider him ſingly by himſelf. 'Tis not Love, but the Deſire of Riches and Honour, which makes Women run into the Embraces of an indolent Huſband. Ambition, not Affection, forms ſuch Marriages. I believe indeed they may be followed with ſome Honours and Advantages, but I can never think that this is the Way to enjoy the Pleaſures of an affectionate Union, nor to feel thoſe ſecret and charming Emotions of Hearts that have long ſtrove to be united. Theſe Martyrs of Marriage pine always for larger Fortunes, which they think they have loſt. The Wife ſees Huſbands richer than her own, and the Huſband Wives better portioned than his. Their intereſted Vows occaſion Regret, and Regret produces Hatred. They ſoon part, or always deſire it. This

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reſtleſs and tormenting Paſſion puniſhes them for aiming at other Advantages of Love than Love itſelf.

If there is any thing which may properly be called Happineſs here below, I am perſuaded it is in the Union of two Perſons who love each other with perfect Liberty, who are united by a ſecret Inclination, and ſatisfied with each other's Merit: Their Hearts are full, and leave no Vacancy for any other Paſſion; they enjoy perpetual Tranquillity, becauſe they enjoy Content.

If I could believe you as truly perſuaded of my Merit as I am of yours, I might ſay there has been ſuch a Time when we were ſuch a Pair. Alas! how was it poſſible I ſhould not be certain of your Merit? If I could ever have doubted it, the univerſal Eſteem would have made me determine in your Favour. What Country, what City has not deſired your Preſence? Could you ever retire but you drew the Eyes and Hearts of all after you? Did not every one rejoice in having ſeen you? Even Women, breaking through the Laws of Decorum which Cuſtom had impoſed upon them, ſhewed manifeſtly they felt ſomething more for you than Eſteem. I have known ſome who have been profuſe in their Huſbands Praiſes, who have yet envied my Happineſs, and given ſtrong Intimations, they could have refuſed you Nothing. But what could reſiſt you? Your Reputation, which ſo much ſoothed the Vanity of our Sex; your Air, your Manner; that Life in your Eyes, which ſo admirably

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admirably expreſſed the Vivacity of your Mind; your Converſation, with that Eaſe and Elegance, which gave every thing you ſpoke ſuch an agreeable and inſinuating Turn; in ſhort, every thing ſpoke for you: very different from ſome mere Scholars, who with all their Learning, have not the Capacity to keep up an ordinary Converſation; and with all their Wit, cannot win the Affections of Women, who have a much leſs Share than themſelves.

With what Eaſe did you compoſe Verſes? And yet thoſe ingenious Trifles, which were but a Recreation after your more ſerious Studies, are ſtill the Entertainment and Delight of Perſons of the beſt Taſte. The ſmalleſt Song, nay the leaſt Sketch of any thing you made for me, had a thouſand Beauties capable of making it laſt as long as there are Love or Lovers in the World. Thus thoſe Songs will be ſung in Honour of other Women, which you deſigned only for me; and thoſe tender and natural Expreſſions which ſpoke your Love, will help others to explain their Paſſion, with much more Advantage than what they themſelves are capable of.

What Rivals did your Galantries of this Kind occaſion me? How many Ladies laid Claim to them? 'Twas a Tribute their Self-love paid to their Beauty. How many have I ſeen with Sighs declare their Paſſion for you, when after ſome common Viſit you had made them, they chanced to be complimented for the *Sylvia* of your Poems: Others in Deſpair and Envy have reproached me, that

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that I had no Charms but what your Wit beſtowed on me, nor in any thing the Advantage over them, but in being beloved by you. Can you believe if I tell you, that notwithſtanding the Vanity of my Sex, I thought myſelf peculiarly happy in having a Lover, to whom I was obliged for my Charms: and took a ſecret Pleaſure in being admired by a Man, who when he pleaſed could raiſe his Miſtreſs to the Character of a Goddeſs? Pleaſed with your Glory only, I read with Delight all thoſe praiſes you offered me, and without reflecting how little I deſerved, I believed myſelf ſuch as you deſcribed me, that I might be more certain I pleaſed you.

But oh! Where is that happy Time fled? I now lament my Lover, and of all my Joys there remains Nothing but the painful Remembrance that *they are paſt*. Now learn, all you my Rivals who once viewed my Happineſs with ſuch jealous Eyes, that he you once envied me, can never more be yours or mine. I loved him; my Love was his Crime, and the Cauſe of his Puniſhment. My Beauty once charmed him: Pleaſed with each other, we paſſed our brighteſt Days in Tranquillity and Happineſs. If that was a Crime, 'tis a Crime I am yet fond of, and I have no other Regret, than that againſt my Will I muſt neceſſarily be innocent. But what do I ſay? My Misfortune was to have cruel Relations, whoſe Malice diſturbed the Calm we enjoyed: Had they been capable of the Returns of Reaſon, I had now been happy in the Enjoyment

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of my dear Husband. Oh! How cruel were they when their blind Fury urged a Villain to surprise you in your Sleep! Where was I? Where was your *Heloise* then? What Joy should I have had in defending my Lover: I would have guarded you from Violence, though at the Expence of my Life; my Cries and Shrieks alone would have stopped the Hand———Oh! whither does the Excess of Passion hurry me; Here Love is shocked, and Modesty, joined with Despair, deprive me of Words: 'Tis Eloquence to be silent where no Expressions can reach the Greatness of the Misfortune.

But tell me whence proceeds your Neglect of me since my being professed? You know Nothing moved me to it but your Disgrace, nor did I give any Consent but yours. Let me hear what is the Occasion of your Coldness, or give me Leave to tell you now my Opinion. Was it not the sole View of Pleasure which engaged you to me? And has not my Tenderness, by leaving you Nothing to wish for, extinguished your Desires? Wretched *Heloise!* You could please when you wished to avoid it: You merited Incense, when you could remove to a Distance the Hand offered it. But since your Heart has been softened, and has yielded; since you have devoted and sacrificed yourself, you are deserted and forgotten. I am convinced, by sad Experience, that it is natural to avoid those to whom we have been too much obliged; and that uncommon Generosity produces Neglect rather than

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than Acknowledgment. My Heart surrendered too soon, to gain the Esteem of the Conqueror; you took it without Difficulty, and give it up as easily. But ungrateful as you are, I will never consent to it. And though in this Place I ought not to retain a Wish of my own, yet I have ever secretly perserved the Desire of being beloved by you. When I pronounced my sad Vow, I then had about me your last Letters, in which you protested you would be wholly mine, and would never live but to love me. 'Tis to you therefore I have offered myself; you had my Heart, and I had yours; do not demand any thing back; You must bear with my Passion, as a Thing which of Right belongs to you, and from which you can no Ways be disingaged.

Alas! What Folly is it to talk at this Rate? I see Nothing here but Marks of the Deity, and I speak of Nothing but Man! You have been the cruel Occasion of this, by your Conduct: Unfaithful Man! Ought you at once to break off loving me? Why did you not deceive me for a while, rather than immediately abandon me? If you had given me at least but some faint Signs even of a dying Passion, I myself had favoured the Deception. But in vain would I flatter myself that you could be constant; you have left me no Colour of making your Excuse. I am earnestly desirous to see you, but if that be impossible, I will content myself with a few Lines from your Hand. Is it so hard for one who loves to write? I ask for none of your Letters filled

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with Learning, and writ for your Reputation: All I desire is such Letters as the Heart dictates, and which the Hand can scarce write fast enough. How did I deceive myself with the Hopes that you would be wholly mine, when I took the Veil, and engaged myself to live for ever under your Laws? For in being professed, I vowed no more than to be yours only, and I obliged myself voluntarily to a Confinement in which you desired to place me. Death only then can make me leave the Place where you have fixed me: and then too my Ashes shall rest here, and wait for yours, in order to shew my Obedience and Devotedness no you, to the latest Moment possible.

Why should I conceal from you the Secret of my Call? You know it was neither Zeal nor Devotion which led me to the Cloyster. Your Conscience is too faithful a Witness to permit you to disown it. Yet here I am, and here I will remain; to this Place an unfortunte Love and my cruel Relations have condemned me. But if you do not continue your Concern for me, if I lose your Affection, what have I gained by my Imprisonment? What Recompence can I hope for? The unhappy Consequences of a criminal Conduct, and your Disgraces, have put on me this Habit of Chastity, and not the sincere Desire of being truly penitent. Thus I strive and labour in vain. Among those who are wedded to God I serve a Man: Among the heroic Supporters of the Cross I am a poor Slave to a human

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human Paſſion; at the Head of a Religious Community I am devoted to *Abelard* only. What a Prodigy am I? Enlighten me, O Lord! Does thy Grace or my own Deſpair draw theſe ~~draw theſe~~ Words from me? I am ſenſible I am, in the Temple of Chaſtity, covered only with the Aſhes of that Fire which hath conſumed us. I am here, I confeſs, a Sinner, but one who far from weeping for her Sins, weeps only for her Lover; far from abhorring her Crimes, endeavours only to add to them; and who with a Weakneſs unbecoming the State I am in, pleaſe myſelf continually with the Remembrance of paſt Actions, when it is impoſſible to renew them.

Good God! what is all this! I reproach myſelf for my own Faults, I accuſe you for yours, and to what Purpoſe? Veiled as I am, behold in what a Diſorder you have plunged me! How difficult is it to fight always for Duty againſt Inclination? I know what Obligations this Veil lays on me, but I feel more ſtrongly what Power a long habitual Paſſion has over my Heart. I am conquered by my Inclination. My Love troubles my Mind, and diſorders my Will. Sometimes I am ſwayed by the Sentiments of Piety which ariſe in me, and the next Moment I yield up my Imagination to all that is amorous and tender. I tell you To-day what I would not have ſaid to you Yeſterday. I had reſolved to love you no more; I conſidered I had made a Vow, taken the Veil, and am as it were dead and buried; yet there riſes unexpectedly from

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the Bottom of my Heart a Paſſion which triumphs over all theſe Notions, and darkens all my Reaſon and Devotion. You reign in ſuch inward Retreats of my Soul, that I know not where to attack you: When I endeavour to break thoſe Chains by which I am bound to you, I only deceive myſelf, and all the Efforts I am able to make ſerve but to bind them the faſter. Oh, for Pity's ſake, help a Wretch to renounce her Deſires, herſelf, and if it be poſſible even to renounce You! If you are a Lover, a Father, help a Miſtreſs, comfort a Child! Theſe tender Names, cannot they move you? Yield either to Pity or Love. If you gratify my Requeſt I ſhall continue a Religious without longer prophaning my Calling. I am ready to humble myſelf with you to the wonderful Providence of God, who does all Things for our Sanctification, who by his Grace purifies all that is vicious and corrupt in the Principle, and by the inconceivable Riches of his Mercy draws us to himſelf againſt our Wiſhes, and by Degrees opens our Eyes to diſcern the Greatneſs of his Bounty, which at firſt we would not underſtand.

I thought to end my Letter here. But now I am complaining againſt you, I muſt unload my Heart, and tell you all its Jealouſies and Reproaches. Indeed I thought it ſomething hard that when we had both engaged to conſecrate ourſelves to Heaven, you ſhould inſiſt upon my doing it firſt. Does *Abelard* then, ſaid I, ſuſpect he ſhall ſee renewed in me the Example of *Lot*'s Wife, who could not forbear looking back

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back when she left *Sodom?* If my Youth and Sex might give Occasion of Fear, that I should return to the World; could not my Behaviour, my Fidelity, and this Heart which you ought to know, could not these banish such ungenerous Apprehensions? This distrustful Foresight touched me sensibly. I said to myself, There was a Time when he could rely upon my bare Word, and does he now want Vows to secure himself of me? What Occasion have I given him in the whole Course of my Life to admit the least Suspicion? I could meet him at all his Assignations, and would I decline following him to the Seats of Holiness? I who have not refused to be a Victim of Pleasure to gratify him, can he think I would refuse to be a Sacrifice of Honour to obey him? Has Vice such Charms to well-born Souls? and when we have once drank of the Cup of Sinners, is it with such Difficulty that we take the Calice of Saints? Or did you believe yourself a greater Master to teach Vice than Virtue, or did you think it was more easy to persuade me to the first than the latter? No: This Suspicion would be injurious to both. Virtue is too amiable not to be embraced, when you reveal her Charms; and Vice too hideous not to be avoided, when you shew her Deformities. Nay, when you please, any thing seems lovely to me, and Nothing is frightful or difficult when you are by. I am only weak when I am alone and unsupported by you, and therefore it depends on you alone, that I may be such as you desire. I wish to Heaven you had

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not ſuch a Power over me. If you had any Occaſion to fear, you would be leſs negligent. But what is there for you to fear? I have done too much, and now have Nothing more to do, but to triumph over your Ingratitude. When we lived happy together, you might have made it a Doubt whether Pleaſure or Affection united me more to you; but the Place from whence I write to you, muſt now have entirely taken away that Doubt. Even here I love you as much as ever I did in the World. If I had loved Pleaſures, could I not yet have found Means to have gratified myſelf? I was not above Twenty-two Years old: And there were other Men left, though I was deprived of *Abelard:* And yet did I not bury myſelf alive in a Nunnery, and triumph over Love, at an Age capable of enjoying it in its full Latitude? 'Tis to you I ſacrifice theſe Remains of a tranſitory Beauty, theſe widowed Nights and tedious Days, which I paſs without ſeeing you; and ſince you cannot poſſeſs them, I take them from you to offer them to Heaven, and to make, alas! but a ſecondary Oblation of my Heart, my Days, and my Life!

I am ſenſible I have dwelt too long on this Head; I ought to ſpeak leſs to you of your Misfortunes, and of my own Sufferings, for Love of you. We tarniſh the Luſtre of our moſt beautiful Actions when we applaud them ourſelves. This is true, and yet there is a Time when we may with Decency commend ourſelves; when we have to do with thoſe whom baſe Ingratitude has ſtupified, we cannot too

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too much praiſe our own good Actions. Now if you were of this Sort of Men, this would be a home Reflection on you. Irreſolute as I am I ſtill love you, and yet I muſt hope for Nothing. I have renounced Life and ſtripped myſelf of every thing, but I find I neither have nor can renounce my *Abelard:* Though I have loſt my Lover, I ſtill preſerve my Love. O Vows! O Convent! I have not loſt my Humanity under your inexorable Diſcipline! You have not made me Marble by changing my Habit: My Heart is not hardened by my Impriſonment; I am ſtill ſenſible to what has touched me, though alas I ought not to be ſo! Without offending your Commands, permit a Lover to exhort me to live in Obedience to your rigorous Rules. Your Yoke will be lighter, if that Hand ſupport me under it; your Exerciſes will be amiable, if he ſhews me their Advantage. Retirement, Solitude! You will not appear terrible, if I may but ſtill know I have any Place in his Memory. A Heart which has been ſo ſenſibly affected as mine cannot ſoon be indifferent. We fluctuate long between Love and Hatred, before we can arrive at a happy Tranquillity, and we always flatter ourſelves with ſome diſtant Hope, that we ſhall not be quite forgotten.

Yes, *Abelard*, I conjure you by the Chains I bear here, to eaſe the Weight of them, and make them as agreeable as I wiſh they were to me: Teach me the Maxims of Divine Love. Since you have forſaken me, I glory in being wedded to Heaven. My Heart adores that

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Title, and disdains any other; tell me how this Divine Love is nourished, how it operates, and purifies itself. When we were tossed in the Ocean of the World we could hear of Nothing but your Verses, which published every where our Joys and our Pleasures. Now we are in the Haven of Grace, is it not fit you should discourse to me of this Happiness, and teach me every thing which might improve and heighten it? Shew me the same Complaisance in my present Condition, as you did when we were in the World. Without changing the Ardor of our Affections, let us change their Object; let us leave our Songs, and sing Hymns; let us lift up our Hearts to God, and have no Transports but for his Glory.

I expect this from you as a Thing you cannot refuse me. God has a peculiar Right over the Hearts of great Men, which he has created. When he pleases to touch them, he ravishes them, and lets them not speak nor breathe but for his Glory: 'Till that Moment of Grace arrives, O think of me——do not forget me ——remember my Love, my Fidelity, my Constancy; love me as your Mistress, cherish me as your Child, your Sister, your Wife. Consider that I still love you, and yet strive to avoid loving you. What a Word, what a Design is this! I shake with Horror, and my Heart revolts against what I say. I shall blot all my Paper with Tears—I end my long Letter, wishing you, if you can desire it, (would to Heaven I could) for ever Adieu.

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LETTER III.

ABELARD *to* HELOISE.

That the Reader may make a right Judgment on the following Letter, it is proper he should be informed of the Condition Abelard *was in when he wrote it. The Duke of* Britany, *whose Subject he was born, jealous of the Glory of* France, *which then ingrossed all the most famous Scholars of* Europe, *and being besides acquainted with the Persecution* Abelard *had suffered from his Enemies, had nominated him to the Abbey of St.* Gildas, *and by this Benefaction and Mark of his Esteem, engaged him to pass the rest of his Days in his Dominions. He received this Favour with great Joy, imagining, that by leaving* France, *he should lose his Passion, and gain a new turn of Mind upon entering into his new Dignity. The Abbey of St.* Gildas *is seated upon a Rock, which the Sea beats with its Waves.* Abelard, *who had laid on himself the Necessity of vanquishing a Passion which Absence had in a great measure weakened, endeavoured in this Solitude to extinguish the Remains of it by his Tears. But upon his receiving the foregoing Letter, he could not resist so powerful an Attack, but proves as weak and as much to be pitied as* Heloise: *'Tis not then a Master or Director that speaks to her, but a Man who had loved her, and loves*

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her ſtill: And under this Character we are to conſider Abelard *when he wrote the following Letter. If he ſeems by ſome Paſſages in it to have begun to feel the Motions of Divine Grace, they appear as yet to be only by Starts, and without any Uniformity.*

COULD I have imagined that a Letter not writen to yourſelf could have fallen into your Hands, I had been more cautious not to have inſerted any thing in it which might awaken the Memory of our paſt Misfortunes. I deſcribed with Boldneſs the Series of my Diſgraces to a Friend, in order to make him leſs ſenſible of the Loſs he had ſuſtained. If by this well-meaning Artifice I have diſturbed you, I purpoſe here to dry up thoſe Tears which the ſad Deſcription occaſioned you to ſhed: I intend to mix my Grief with yours, and pour out my Heart before you; in ſhort, to lay open before your Eyes all my Trouble, and the Secret of my Soul, which my Vanity has hitherto made me conceal from the reſt of the World, and which you now force from me, in ſpite of my Reſolutions to the contrary.

It is true, that in a Senſe of the Afflictions which had befallen us, and obſerving that no change of our Condition was to be expected; that thoſe proſperous Days which had ſeduced us were now paſt, and there remained nothing but to eraze out of our Minds, by painful Endeavours, all Marks and Remembrance of them, I had wiſhed to find in Philoſophy and Religion a Remedy for my Diſgrace; I ſearched out

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out an *Asylum* to secure me from Love. I was come to the sad Experiment of making Vows to harden my Heart. But what have I gained by this? If my Passion has been put under a Restraint, my Ideas yet remain. I promise myself that I will forget you, and yet cannot think of it without loving you; and am pleased with that Thought. My Love is not at all weakened by those Reflections I make in order to free myself. The Silence I am surrounded with makes me more sensible to its Impressions, and while I am unemployed with any other Things, this makes itself the Business of my whole Vacation. Till after a Multitude of useless Endeavours I begin to persuade myself, that 'tis a superfluous Trouble to strive to free myself; and that it is Wisdom sufficient if I can conceal from every one but you, my Confusion and Weakness.

I remove to a Distance from your Person, with an Intention of avoiding you as an Enemy; and yet I incessantly seek for you in my Mind: I recall your Image in my Memory; and in such different Disquietudes I betray and contradict myself. I hate you; I love you; Shame presses me on all Sides; I am at this Moment afraid lest I should seem more indifferent than you, and yet I am ashamed to discover my Trouble. How weak are we in ourselves, if we do not support ourselves on the Cross of Christ? Shall we have so little Courage, and shall that Uncertainty your Heart labours with, of serving two Masters, affect mine too? You see the Confusion I am in, what I blame myself for, and

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and what I ſuffer. Religion commands me to purſue Virtue, ſince I have nothing to hope for from Love. But Love ſtill preſerves its Dominion in my Fancy, and entertains itſelf with paſt Pleaſures. Memory ſupplies the Place of a Miſtreſs. Piety and Duty are not always the Fruits of Retirement; even in Deſarts, when the Dew of Heaven falls not on us, we love what we ought no longer to love. The Paſſions, ſtirred up by Solitude, fill thoſe Regions of Death and Silence; and it is very ſeldom that what ought to be is truly followed there, and that God only is loved and ſerved. Had I always had ſuch Notions as theſe, I had inſtructed you better. You call me your Maſter; 'tis true, you were intruſted to my Care. I ſaw you, I was earneſt to teach you vain Sciences; it coſt you your Innocence, and me my Liberty. Your Uncle, who was fond of you, became therefore my Enemy, and revenged himſelf on me. If now having loſt the Power of ſatisfying my Paſſion, I had loſt too that of loving you, I ſhould have ſome Conſolation. My Enemies would have given me that Tranquillity, which *Origen* purchaſed by a Crime: How miſerable am I! My Misfortune does not looſe my Chains, my Paſſion grows furious by Impotence, and that Deſire I ſtill have for you amidſt all my Diſgraces, makes me more unhappy than the Misfortune itſelf. I find myſelf much more guilty in my Thoughts of you, even amidſt my Tears, than in poſſeſſing yourſelf when I was in full Liberty. I continually think of you, I continually

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nually call to mind that Day when you bestowed on me the first Marks of your Tenderness. In this Condition, O Lord! if I run to prostrate myself before thy Altars, if I beseech thee to pity me, why does not the pure Flame of thy Spirit consume the Sacrifice that is offered to thee? Cannot this Habit of Penitence which I wear, intereſt Heaven to treat me more favourably? But that is still inexorable, because my Passion still lives in me, the Fire is only covered over with deceitful Ashes, and cannot be extinguished but by extraordinary Grace. We deceive Men, but Nothing is hid from God.

You tell me, that 'tis for me you live under that Veil which covers you; why do you prophane your Vocation with such Words? Why provoke a jealous God by a Blasphemy? I hoped, after our Separation, you would have changed your Sentiments; I hoped too, that God would have delivered me from the Tumult of my Senses and that Contrariety which reigns in my Heart. We commonly die to the Affections of those whom we see no more, and they to ours: Absence is the Tomb of Love. But to me Absence is an unquiet Remembrance of what I once loved, which continually torments me. I flattered myself that when I should see you no more, you would only rest in my Memory, without giving any Trouble to my Mind: that *Britany* and the Sea would inspire other Thoughts; that my Fasts and Studies would by Degrees eraze you out of my Heart: But in spite of severe Fasts and redoubled Studies,

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dies, in ſpite of the Diſtance of three hundred Miles which ſeparates us; your Image, ſuch as you deſcribe yourſelf in your Veil, appears to me, and confounds all my Reſolutions.

What Means have I not uſed? I have armed my own Hands againſt myſelf; I have exhauſted my Strength in conſtant Exerciſes; I comment upon St. *Paul*; I diſpute with *Ariſtotle*; in ſhort, I do all I uſed to do before I loved you, but all in vain; nothing can be ſucceſsful that oppoſes you. Oh! do not add to my Miſeries by your Conſtancy; forget, if you can, your Favours, and that Right which they claim over me; permit me to be indifferent. I envy their Happineſs who have never loved; how quiet and eaſy are they! But the Tide of Pleaſures has always a Reflux of Bitterneſs; I am but too much convinced now of this; but though I am no longer deceived by Love, I am not cured: While my Reaſon condemns it, my Heart declares for it. I am deplorable, that I have not the Ability to free myſelf from a Paſſion which ſo many Circumſtances, this Place, my Perſon, and my Diſgraces, tend to deſtroy. I yield, without conſidering, that a Reſiſtance would wipe out my paſt Offences, and would procure me in their Stead, Merit and Repoſe. Why ſhould you uſe Eloquence to reproach me for my Flight, and for my Silence? Spare the Recital of our Aſſignations, and your conſtant Exactneſs to them; without calling up ſuch diſturbing Thoughts, I have enough to ſuffer. What great Advantages would Philoſophy give us over

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other Men, if by ſtudying it we could learn to govern our Paſſions? But how humbled ought we to be when we cannot maſter them? What Efforts, what Relapſes, what Agitations do we undergo? And how long are we toſt in this Confuſion, unable to exert our Reaſon, to poſſeſs our Souls, or to rule our Affections?

What a troubleſome Employment is Love! and how valuable is Virtue even upon Conſideration of our own Eaſe! Recollect your Extravagancies of Paſſion, gueſs at my Diſtractions; number up our Cares, if poſſible, our Griefs, and our Inquietudes; throw theſe Things out of the Account, and let Love have all its remaining Softneſs and Pleaſure. How little is that? And yet for ſuch Shadows of Enjoyments which at firſt appeared to us, are we ſo weak our whole Lives that we cannot now help writing to each other, covered as we are with Sackcloth and Aſhes: How much happier ſhould we be, if by our Humiliation and Tears we could make our Repentance ſure. The Love of Pleaſure is not eradicated out of the Soul, but by extraordinary Efforts; it has ſo powerful a Party in our Breaſts, that we find it difficult to condemn it ourſelves. What Abhorrence can I be ſaid to have of my Sins, if the Objects of them are always amiable to me? How can I ſeparate from the Perſon I love, the Paſſion I muſt deteſt? Will the Tears I ſhed be ſufficient to render it odious to me? I know not how it happens, there is always a Pleaſure in weeping for a beloved Object. 'Tis difficult in our Sorrow to diſtinguiſh Penitence

tence from Love. The Memory of the Crime, and the Memory of the Object which has charmed us, are too nearly related to be immediately ſeparated. And the Love of God in its Beginning, does not wholly annihilate the Love of the Creature.

But what Excuſes could I not find in you, if the Crime were excuſable? Unprofitable Honour, troubleſome Riches, could never tempt me; but thoſe Charms, that Beauty, that Air, which I yet behold at this Inſtant, have occaſioned my Fall. Your Looks were the Beginning of my Guilt; your Eyes, your Diſcourſe, pierced my Heart; and in ſpite of that Ambition and Glory which filled it, and offered to make a Defence, Love ſoon made itſelf Maſter. God, in order to puniſh me, forſook me. His Providence permitted thoſe Conſequences which have ſince happened. You are no longer of the World; you have renounced it: I am a Religious devoted to Solitude; ſhall we make no Advantage of our Condition? Would you deſtroy my Piety in its Infant State? Would you have me forſake the Convent into which I am but newly entered? Muſt I renounce my Vows? I have made them in the Preſence of God: Whither ſhall I fly from his Wrath, if I violate them? Suffer me to ſeek for Eaſe in my Duty: How difficult it is to procure that! I paſs whole Days and Nights alone in this Cloyſter, without cloſing my Eyes. My Love burns fiercer, amidſt the happy Indifference of thoſe who ſurround me, and my Heart is at once pierced with

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with your Sorrows and its own. Oh what ~~what~~ a Loſs have I ſuſtained, when I conſider your Conſtancy! What Pleaſures have I miſsed enjoying! I ought not to confeſs this Weakneſs to you; I am ſenſible I commit a Fault; if I could have ſhewed more Firmneſs of Mind, I ſhould perhaps have provoked your Reſentment againſt me, and your Anger might work that Effect in you which your Virtue could not. If in the World I publiſhed my Weakneſs by Verſes and Loveſongs, ought not the dark Cells of this Houſe to conceal that Weakneſs, at leaſt under an Appearance of Piety! Alas! I am ſtill the ſame! Or if I avoid the Evil, I cannot do the Good; and yet I ought to join both, in order to make this Manner of Living profitable. Bnt how difficult is this in the Trouble which ſurrounds me? Duty, Reaſon, and Decency, which upon other Occaſions have ſuch Power over me, are here entirely uſeleſs. The Goſpel is a Language I do not underſtand when it oppoſes my Paſſion. Thoſe Oaths which I have taken before the Holy Altar, are feeble Helps when oppoſed to you. Amidſt ſo many Voices which call me to my Duty, I hear and obey Nothing but the ſecret Dictates of a deſperate Paſſion. Void of all Reliſh for Virtue, any Concern for my Condition, or any Application to my Studies, I am continually preſent by my Imagination where I ought not to be, and I find I have no Power, when I would at any Time correct it. I feel a perpetual Strife between my Inclination and my

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my Duty. I find myſelf entirely a diſtracted Lover; unquiet in the Midſt of Silence, and reſtleſs in this Abode of Peace and Repoſe. How ſhameful is ſuch a Condition!

Conſider me no more, I entreat you, as a Founder, or any great Perſonage; your Encomiums do but ill agree with ſuch multiplied Weakneſſes. I am a miſerable Sinner, proſtrate before my Judge, and with my Face preſſed to the Earth, I mix my Tears and Sighs in the Duſt, when the Beams of Grace and Reaſon enlighten me. Come, ſee me in this Poſture, and ſollicit me to love you? Come, if you think fit, and in your Holy Habit thruſt yourſelf between God and me, and be a Wall of Separation. Come, and force from me thoſe Sighs, Thoughts, and Vows, which I owe to him only. Aſſiſt the Evil Spirits, and be the Inſtrument of their Malice. What cannot you induce a Heart to, whoſe Weakneſs you ſo perfectly know? But rather withdraw yourſelf, and contribute to my Salvation. Suffer me to avoid Deſtruction, I entreat you, by our former tendereſt Affection, and by our common Misfortunes. It will always be the higheſt Love to ſhew none: I here releaſe you of all your Oaths, and Engagements. Be God's wholly, to whom you are appropriated; I will never oppoſe ſo pious a Deſign. How happy ſhall I be if I thus loſe you! then I ſhall be indeed a Religious, and you a perfect Example of an Abbeſs.

Make yourſelf Amends by ſo glorious a Choice

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Choice; make your Virtue a Spectacle worthy Men and Angels: Be humble among your Children, assiduous in your Choir, exact in your Discipline, diligent in your Reading; make even your Recreations useful. Have you purchased your Vocation at so slight a Rate, as that you should not turn it to the best Advantage? Since you have permitted yourself to be abused by false Doctrine, and criminal Instructions, resist not those good Counsels which Grace and Religion inspire me with. I will confess to you, I have thought myself hitherto an abler Master to instill Vice, than to excite Virtue. My false Eloquence has only set off false Good. My Heart, drunk with Voluptuousness, could only suggest Terms proper and moving to recommend that. The Cup of Sinners overflows with so enchanting a Sweetness, and we are naturally so much inclined to taste it, that it needs only be offered to us. On the other hand, the Calice of Saints is filled with a bitter Draught, and Nature starts from it. And yet you reproach me with Cowardice for giving it you first; I willingly submit to these Accusations. I cannot enough admire the Readiness you shewed to take the religious Habit: Bear therefore with Courage the Cross which you have taken up so resolutely. Drink of the Calice of Saints, even to the Bottom, without turning your Eyes with Uncertainty upon me. Let me remove far from you, and obey the Apostle who hath said, *Fly*.

You intreat me to return, under a Pretence of

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of Devotion. Your Earneſtneſs in this Point creates a Suſpicion in me, and makes me doubtful how to anſwer you. Should I commit an Error here, my Words would bluſh, if I may ſay ſo, after the Hiſtory of my Misfortunes. The Church is jealous of its Glory, and commands that her Children ſhould be induced to the Practice of Virtue by virtuous Means. When we have approached God after an unblameable Manner, we may then with Boldneſs invite others to him. But to forget *Heloiſe*, to ſee her no more, is what Heaven demands of *Abelard*; and to expect Nothing from *Abelard*, to loſe him, even in Idea, is what Heaven enjoins *Heloiſe*. To forget, in the Caſe of Love, is the moſt neceſſary Penitence, and the moſt difficult. It is eaſy to recount our Faults; how many through Indiſcretion, have made themſelves a ſecond Pleaſure of this, inſtead of confeſſing them with Humility. The only Way to return to God is, by neglecting the Creature which we have adored, and adoring God whom we have neglected. This may appear harſh, but it muſt be done if we would be ſaved.

To make it more eaſy, obſerve why I preſſed you to your Vow before I took mine; and pardon my Sincerity, and the Deſign I have of meriting your Neglect and Hatred, if I conceal Nothing from you of the Particulars you enquire after. When I ſaw myſelf ſo oppreſſed with my Misfortune, my Impotency made me jealous, and I conſidered all Men as my Rivals. Love has more of Diſtruſt than Aſſurance

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ance. I was apprehenſive of Abundance of Things, becauſe I ſaw I had Abundance of Defects; and being tormented with Fear from my own Example, I imagined your Heart, which had been ſo much accuſtomed to Love, would not be long without entering into a new Engagement. Jealouſy can eaſily believe the moſt dreadful Conſequences. I was deſirous to put myſelf out of a Poſſibility of doubting of you. I was very urgent to perſuade you, that Decency required you ſhould withdraw from the envious Eyes of the World; that Modeſty, and our Friendſhip, demanded it; nay, that your own Safety obliged you to it; and that after ſuch a Revenge taken upon me, you could expect to be ſecure no where but in a Convent.

I will do you Juſtice, you were very eaſily perſuaded to it. My Jealouſy ſecretly triumphed over your innocent Compliance; and yet, triumphant as I was, I yielded you up to God with an unwilling Heart. I ſtill kept my Gift as much as was poſſible, and only parted with it that I might effectually put it out of the Power of Men. I did not perſuade you to Religion out of any Regard to your Happineſs, but condemned you to it, like an Enemy who deſtroys what he cannot carry off. And yet you heard my Diſcourſes with Kindneſs, you ſometimes interrupted me with Tears, and preſſed me to acquaint you which of the Convents was moſt in my Eſteem. What a Comfort did I feel in ſeeing you ſhut up! I was now at Eaſe, and took a Satisfaction in conſidering

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fidering that you did not continue long in the World after my Diſgrace, and that you would return in it no more.

But ſtill this was doubtful; I imagined Women were incapable of maintaining any conſtant Reſolutions, unleſs they were forced by the Neceſſity of fixed Vows. I wanted thoſe Vows, and Heaven itſelf for your Security, that I might no longer diſtruſt you. Ye holy Manſions, ye impenetrable Retreats, from what numberleſs Apprehenſions have you freed me? Religion and Piety keep a ſtrict Guard round your Grates and high Walls. What a Haven of Reſt is this to a jealous Mind! And with what Impatience did I endeavour it! I went every Day trembling to exhort you to this Sacrifice; I admired, without daring to mention it then, a Brightneſs in your Beauty which I had never obſerved before. Whether it was the Bloom of a riſing Virtue, or an Anticipation of that great Loſs I was going to ſuffer, I was not curious in examining the Cauſe, but only haſtened your being profeſſed. I engaged your Prioreſs in my Guilt by a criminal Bribe, with which I purchaſed the Right of burying you. The profeſſed of the Houſe were alike bribed, and concealed from you, by my Directions, all their Scruples and Diſguſts. I omitted nothing, either little or great: And if you had eſcaped all my Snares, I myſelf would not have retired: I was reſolved to follow you every where. This Shadow of myſelf would always have purſued your Steps, and continually occaſioned either your Confuſion or Fear, which

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which would have been a ſenſible Gratification to me.

But thanks to Heaven, you reſolved to make a Vow; I accompanied you with Terror to the Foot of the Altar: and while you ſtretched out your Hand to touch the ſacred Cloth, I heard you pronounce diſtinctly thoſe fatal Words which for ever ſeparated you from all Men. 'Till then your Beauty and Youth ſeemed to oppoſe my Deſign, and to threaten your return into the World. Might not a ſmall Temptation have changed you? Is it poſſible to renounce ones ſelf entirely at the Age of Two and Twenty? At an Age which claims the moſt abſolute Liberty, could you think the World no longer worthy of your Regard? How much did I wrong you, and what Weakneſs did I impute to you? You were in my Imagination nothing but Lightneſs and Inconſtancy. Might not a young Woman at the Noiſe of the Flames, and of the Fall of *Sodom*, look back, and pity ſome one Perſon? I took notice of your Eyes, your Motion, your Air; I trembled at every thing. You may call ſuch a ſelf-intereſted Conduct Treachery, Perfidiouſneſs, Murther. A Love which was ſo like to Hatred, ought to provoke the utmoſt Contempt and Anger.

It is fit you ſhould know that the very Moment, when I was convinced of your being entirely devoted to me, when I ſaw you were infinitely worthy of all my Love and Acknowledgment; I imagined I could love you no more; I thought it time to leave off giving

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you any Marks of Affection; and I conſidered that by your Holy Eſpouſals you were now the peculiar Care of Heaven, even in the Quality of a Wife. My Jealouſy ſeemed to be extinguiſhed: When God only is our Rival, we have nothing to fear; and being in greater Tranquillity than ever before, I dared even to offer up Prayers, and beſeech him to take you away from my Eyes: but it was not a Time to make raſh Prayers; and my Faith was too imperfect to let them be heard. He who ſees the Depths and Secrets of all Men's Hearts, ſaw mine did not agree with my Words. Neceſſity and Deſpair were the Springs of this Proceeding. Thus I inadvertently offered an Inſult to Heaven, rather than a Sacrifice. God rejected my Offering and my Prayer, and continued my Puniſhment, by ſuffering me to continue my Love. Thus under the Guilt of your Vows, and of the Paſſion which preceded them, I muſt be tormented all the Days of my Life.

If God ſpoke to your Heart, as to that of a Religious whoſe Innocence had firſt engaged him to heap on it a thouſand Favours, I ſhould have matter of Comfort; but to ſee both of us Victims of a criminal Love; to ſee this Love inſult us, and inveſt itſelf with our very Habits, as with Spoils it has taken from our Devotion, fills me with Horror and Trembling. Is this a State of Reprobation? Or are theſe the Conſequences of a long Drunkenneſs in Prophane Love? We cannot ſay Love is a Drunkenneſs and a Poiſon, 'till we are illuminated by Grace; in

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in the mean time it is an Evil which we doat on. When we are under such a Mistake, the Knowledge of our Misery is the first Step towards Amendment. Who does not know that 'tis for the Glory of God, to find no other Foundation in Man for his Mercy, than Man's very Weakness? When he has shewed us this Weakness, and we bewail it, he is ready to put forth his Omnipotence to assist us. Let us say for our Comfort, that what we suffer is one of those long and terrible Temptations which have sometimes disturbed the Vocations of the most Holy.

God can afford his Presence to Men, in order to soften their Calamities, whenever he shall think fit. It was his Pleasure, when you took the Veil, to draw you to him by his Grace. I saw your Eyes, when you spoke your last Farewel, fixed upon the Cross. It was above six Months before you wrote me a Letter, nor during all that Time did I receive any Message from you. I admired this Silence, which I durst not blame, and could not imitate: I wrote to you, you returned me no Answer: Your Heart was then shut: but this Garden of the Spouse is now opened, he is withdrawn from it, and has left you alone: By removing from you, he has made Trial of you; call him back, and strive to regain him. We must have the Assistance of God, that we may break our Chains; we have engaged too deeply in Love, to free ourselves. Our Follies have penetrated even into the most sacred Places. Our Amours have been Matter of

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Scandal to a whole Kingdom. They are read and admired; Love which produced them, has caused them to be described. We shall be a Consolation for the Failings of Youth hereafter. Those who offend after us, will think themselves less Guilty. We are Criminals whose Repentance is late, O may it be sincere! Let us repair, as far as is possible, the Evils we have done; and let *France*, which has been the Witness of our Crimes, be astonished at our Penitence. Let us confound all who would imitate our Guilt; let us take the Part of God against ourselves, and by so doing prevent his Judgment. Our former Irregularities require Tears, Shame, and Sorrow to expiate them. Let us offer up these Sacrifices from our Hearts; let us blush, let us weep. If in these weak Beginnings, Lord, our Heart is not entirely thine, let it at least be made sensible that it ought to be so!

Deliver yourself, *Heloise*, from the shameful Remains of a Passion which has taken too deep Root. Remember that the least Thought for any other than God is an Adultery. If you could see me here with my meager Face, and melancholy Air, surrounded with Numbers of persecuting Monks, who are alarmed at my Reputation for Learning, and offended at my lean Visage, as if I threatened them with a Reformation; what would you say of my base Sighs, and of those unprofitable Tears which deceive these credulous Men. Alas! I am humbled under Love, and not under the Cross. Pity me, and free yourself. If your Vocation be,

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be, as you say, my Work, deprived me not of the Merit of it by your continual Inquietudes. Tell me that you will honour the Habit which covers you, by an inward Retirement. Fear God, that you may be delivered from your Frailties. Love him, if you would advance in Virtue. Be not uneasy in the Cloister, for it is the Dwelling of Saints. Embrace your Bands, they are the Chains of Christ Jesus: He will lighten them, and bear them with you, if you bear them with Humility.

Without growing severe to a Passion which yet possesses you, learn from your own Misery to succour your weak Sisters; pity them upon Consideration of your own Faults. And if any Thoughts too natural shall importune you, fly to the Foot of the Cross, and beg for Mercy; there are Wounds open; lament before the dying Deity. At the Head of a religious Society be not a Slave, and having Rule over Queens, begin to govern yourself. Blush at the least Revolt of your Senses. Remember that even at the Foot of the Altar we often sacrifice to lying Spirits, and that no Incense can be more agreeable to them, than that which in those holy Places burns in the Heart of a Religious still sensible of Passion and Love. If during your Abode in the World, your Soul has acquired a Habit of Loving, feel it now no more but for Jesus Christ. Repent of all the Moments of your Life which you have wasted upon the World, and upon Pleasure; demand them of me, 'tis a Robbery which I am guilty

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of; take Courage, and boldly reproach me with it.

I have been indeed your Maſter, but it was only to teach you Sin. You call me your Father; before I had any Claim to this Title, I deſerved that of Parricide. I am your Brother, but 'tis the Affinity of our Crimes that has purchaſed me that Diſtinction. I am called your Huſband, but it is after a publick Scandal. If you have abuſed the Sanctity of ſo many venerable Names in the Superſcription of your Letter, to do me Honour, and flatter your own Paſſion, blot them out, and place in their Stead thoſe of a Murtherer, a Villain, an Enemy, who has conſpired againſt your Honour, troubled your Quiet, and betrayed your Innocence. You would have periſhed through my Means, but for an extraordinary Act of Grace, which, that you might be ſaved, has thrown me down in the Middle of my Courſe.

This is the Idea you ought to have of a Fugitive, who endeavours to deprive you of the Hope of ſeeing him any more. But when Love has once been ſincere, how difficult is it to determine to love no more? 'Tis a thouſand times more eaſy to renounce the World than Love. I hate this deceitful faithleſs World; I think no more of it; but my Heart ſtill wandering, will eternally make me feel the Anguiſh of having loſt you, in ſpite of all the Convictions of my Underſtanding. In the mean time, though I ſhould be ſo cowardly as to retract what you have read, do not ſuffer me to offer myſelf to your Thoughts, but under this

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this laſt Notion. Remember my laſt Endeavours were to ſeduce your Heart. You periſhed by my Means, and I with you. The ſame Waves ſwallowed us both up. We waited for Death with Indifference, and the ſame Death had carried us headlong to the ſame Puniſhments. But Providence has turned off this Blow, and our Shipwreck has thrown us into a Haven. There are ſome whom the Mercy of God ſaves by Afflictions. Let my Salvation be the Fruit of your Prayers! Let me owe it to your Tears or exemplary Holineſs! Though my Heart, Lord! be filled with the Love of one of thy Creatures, thy Hand can when it pleaſes draw out of it thoſe Ideas which fill its whole Capacity. To love *Heloiſe* truly, is to leave her intirely to that Quiet which Retirement and Virtue afford. I have reſolved it; this Letter ſhall be my laſt Fault. Adieu.

If I die here, I will give Orders that my Body be carried to the Houſe of the *Paraclete*. You ſhall ſee me in that Condition; not to demand Tears from you, 'twill then be too late; weep rather for me now, to extinguiſh that Fire which burns me. You ſhall ſee me, to ſtrengthen your Piety by the Horror of this Carcaſe, and my Death then more eloquent than I can be, will tell you what you love, when you love a Man. I hope you will be contented, when you have finiſhed this mortal Life, to be buried near me. Your cold Aſhes need then fear Nothing, and my Tomb will by that Means be more rich and more renowned.

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LETTER IV.

HELOISE *to* ABELARD.

In the following Letter the Passion of Heloise *breaks out with more Violence than ever. That which she had received from* Abelard, *instead of fortifying her Resolutions, served only to revive in her Memory all their past Endearments and Misfortunes. With this Impression, she writes again to her Husband; and appears now, not so much in the Character of a Religious, striving with the Remains of her former Weakness, as in that of an unhappy Woman abandoned to all the Transports of Love and Despair.*

To Abelard *her well-beloved in Christ Jesus, from* Heloise *his well-beloved in the same Christ Jesus.*

I Read the Letter I received from you with Abundance of Impatience: In spite of all my Misfortunes, I hoped to find Nothing in it besides Arguments of Comfort. But how ingenious are Lovers in tormenting themselves! Judge of the exquisite Sensibility and Force of my Love, by that which causes the Grief of my Soul. I was disturbed at the Superscription of your Letter; why did you place the Name of *Heloise* before that of *Abelard?*

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lard? What means this cruel and unjuſt Diſtinction? 'Twas your Name only, the Name of Father, and of a Huſband, which my eager Eyes ſought after. I did not look for my own, which I much rather, if poſſible, forget, as being the Cauſe of your Misfortune. The Rules of Decorum, and the Character of Maſter and Director which you have over me, oppoſed that ceremonious Manner of addreſſing me; and Love commanded you to baniſh it: Alas! you know all this but too well.

Did you write thus to me before cruel Fortune had ruined my Happineſs? I ſee your Heart has deſerted me, and you have made greater Advances in the Way of Devotion than I could wiſh: Alas! I am too weak to follow you; condeſcend at leaſt to ſtay for me, and animate me with your Advice. Will you have the Cruelty to abandon me? The Fear of this ſtabs my Heart: But the fearful Preſages you make at the latter End of your Letter, thoſe terrible Images you draw of your Death, quite diſtract me. Cruel *Abelard!* you ought to have ſtopped my Tears, and you make them flow. You ought to have quieted the Diſorder of my Heart, and you throw me into Deſpair.

You deſire that after your Death I ſhould take Care of your Aſhes, and pay them the laſt Duties. Alas! in what Temper did you conceive theſe mournful Ideas? And how could you deſcribe them to me? Did not the Apprehenſion of cauſing my preſent Death make the Pen drop from your Hand? You

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did not reflect, I suppose, upon all those Torments to which you were going to deliver me. Heaven, as severe as it has been against me, is not in so great a Degree so, as to permit me to live one Moment after you. Life, without my *Abelard*, is an unsupportable Punishment, and Death a most exquisite Happiness, if by that Means I can be united with him. If Heaven hears the Prayers I continually make for you, your Days will be prolonged, and you will bury me.

Is it not your Part to prepare me by your powerful Exhortations against that great Crisis, which shakes the most resolute and confirmed Minds? Is it not your Part to receive my last Sighs, take Care of my Funeral, and give an Account of my Manners and Faith? Who but you can recommend us worthily to God, and by the Fervour and Merit of your Prayers, conduct those Souls to him which you have joined to his Worship by solemn Contracts? We expect these pious Offices from your paternal Charity. After this you will be free from those Disquietudes which now molest you, and you will quit Life with more Ease whenever it shall please God to call you away. You may follow us content with what you have done, and in a full Assurance of our Happiness. But till then write not to me any such terrible Things: Are we not already sufficiently miserable? Must we aggravate our Sorrows? Our Life here is but a languishing Death; will you hasten it? Our present Disgraces are sufficient to employ our Thoughts continually,

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continually, and shall we seek for new Arguments of Grief in Futurities? How void of Reason are Men, said *Seneca*, to make distant Evils present by Reflection, and to take Pains before Death to lose all the Comforts of Life?

When you have finished your Course here below, you say it is your Desire that your Body be carried to the House of the *Paraclete*; to the Intent that being always exposed to my Eyes, you may be for ever present to my Mind; and that your dead Body may strengthen our Piety, and animate our Prayers. Can you think that the Traces you have drawn in my Heart can ever be worn out; or that any Length of Time can obliterate the Memory we have here of your Benefits? And what Time shall I find for those Prayers you speak of? Alas! I shall then be filled with other Cares. Can so heavy a Misfortune leave me a Moment's Quiet? Can my feeble Reason resist such powerful Assaults? When I am distracted and raving, (if I dare say it) even against Heaven itself, I shall not soften it by my Prayers, but rather provoke it by my Cries and Reproaches! But how should I pray: Or how bear up against my Grief? I should be more urgent to follow you, than to pay you the sad Ceremonies of Burial. It is for you, for *Abelard*, that I have resolved to live; if you are ravished from me, what Use can I make of my miserable Days? Alas! What Lamentations should I make, if Heaven, by a cruel Pity, should preserve me till that Moment? When I but think of this last Separation, I feel all

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all the Pangs of Death; what ſhall I be then, if I ſhould ſee this dreadful Hour? Forbear therefore to infuſe into my Mind ſuch mournful Thoughts, if not for Love, at leaſt for Pity.

You deſire me to give myſelf up to my Duty, and to be wholly God's, to whom I am conſecrated. How can I do that, when you frighten me with Apprehenſions that continually poſſeſs my Mind Day and Night? When an Evil threatens us, and it is impoſſible to ward it off, why do we give up ourſelves to the unprofitable Fear of it, which is yet even more tormenting than the Evil itſelf?

What have I to hope for after this Loſs of you? What can confine me to Earth, when Death ſhall have taken away from me all that was dear upon it? I have renounced without Difficulty all the Charms of Life, preſerving only my Love, and the ſecret Pleaſure of thinking inceſſantly of you, and hearing that you live. And yet, alas! you do not live for me, and I dare not even flatter myſelf with the Hopes that I ſhall ever enjoy a Sight of you more! This is the greateſt of my Afflictions; Mercileſs Fortune! Haſt thou not perſecuted me enough? Thou doſt not give me any Reſpite; thou haſt exhauſted all thy Vengeance upon me, and reſerved thyſelf Nothing whereby thou may'ſt appear terrible to others. Thou haſt wearied thyſelf in tormenting me, and others have nothing now to fear from thy Anger. But to what purpoſe doſt thou ſtill arm thyſelf againſt me? The Wounds I have already

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ready received leave no Room for new ones; why cannot I urge thee to kill me? O doſt thou fear, amidſt the numerous Torments thou heapeſt on me, doſt thou fear that ſuch a Stroke would deliver me from all? Therefore thou preſerveſt me from Death, in order to make me die every Moment.

Dear *Abelard*, pity my Deſpair! Was ever any thing ſo miſerable! The higher you raiſed me above other Women who envied me your Love, the more ſenſible am I now of the Loſs of your Heart. I was exalted to the Top of Happineſs, only that I might have a more terrible Fall. Nothing could formerly be compared to my Pleaſures, and Nothing now can equal my Miſery. My Glory once raiſed the Envy of my Rivals; my preſent Wretchedneſs moves the Compaſſion of all that ſee me. My Fortune has been always in Extremes, ſhe has heaped on me her moſt delightful Favours, that ſhe might load me with the greateſt of her Afflictions. Ingenious in tormenting me, ſhe has made the Memory of the Joys I have loſt, an inexhauſtible Spring of my Tears. Love, which poſſeſt was her greateſt Gift, being taken away, occaſions all my Sorrow. In ſhort, her Malice has entirely ſucceeded, and I find my preſent Afflictions proportionably bitter as the Tranſports which charmed me were ſweet.

But what aggravates my Sufferings yet more, is, that we began to be miſerable at a Time when we ſeemed the leaſt to deſerve it. While we gave ourſelves up to the Enjoyment of

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of a criminal Love, Nothing oppoſed our vicious Pleaſure, But ſcarce had we retrenched what was unlawful in our Paſſion, and taken Refuge in Marriage againſt that Remorſe which might have purſued us, but the whole Wrath of Heaven fell on us in all its Weight. But how barbarous was your Puniſhment? The very Remembrance makes me ſhake with Horror. Could an outrageous Huſband make a Villain ſuffer more that had diſhonoured his Bed? Ah! what Right had a cruel Uncle over us? We were joined to each other even before the Altar, which ſhould have protected you from the Rage of your Enemies. Muſt a Wife draw on you that Puniſhment which ought not to fall any but an adulterous Lover? Beſides, we were ſeparated; you were buſy in your Exerciſes, and inſtructed a learned Auditory in Myſteries which the greateſt Geniuſes before you were not able to penetrate: and I, in Obedience to you, retired to a Cloiſter. I there ſpent whole Days in thinking of you, and ſometimes meditating on holy Leſſons, to which I endeavoured to apply myſelf. In this very Juncture you became the Victim of the moſt unhappy Love. You alone expiated the Crime common to us both: You only were puniſhed, though both of us were guilty. You, who were leaſt ſo, was the Object of the whole Vengeance of a barbarous Man. But why ſhould I rave at your Aſſaſſins? I, wretched I, have ruined you, I have been the Original of all your Misfortunes! Good Heaven! Why was I born to be the Occaſion of
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of so tragical an Accident? How dangerous it is for a great Man to suffer himself to be moved by our Sex! He ought from his Infancy to be inured to Insensibility of Heart, against all our Charms. *Hearken, my Son* (said formerly the wisest of Men) *attend, and keep my Instructions; if a beautiful Woman by her Looks endeavour to intice thee, permit not thyself to be overcome by a corrupt Inclination; reject the Poison she offers, and follow not the Paths which she directs. Her House is the Gate of Destruction and Death.* I have long examined Things, and have found that Death itself is a less dangerous Evil than Beauty. 'Tis the Shipwreck of Liberty, a fatal Snare, from which it is impossible ever to get free. 'Twas Woman which threw down the first Man from that glorious Condition in which Heaven had placed him. She who was created in order to partake of his Happiness, was the sole Cause of his Ruin. How bright had been thy Glory, *Sampson*, if thy Heart had been as firm against the Charms of *Dalilah*, as against the Weapons of the *Philistines!* A Woman disarmed and betrayed thee, who hadst been a glorious Conqueror of Armies. Thou saw'st thyself delivered into the Hands of thy Enemies; thou wast deprived of thy Eyes, those Inlets of Love into thy Soul: Distracted and despairing didst thou die, without any Consolation but that of involving thy Enemies in thy Destruction. *Solomon*, that he might please Women, forsook the Care of pleasing God. That King,

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King, whoſe Wiſdom Princes came from all Parts to admire, he whom God had choſe to build him a Temple, abandoned the Worſhip of thoſe very Altars he had defended, and proceeded to ſuch a Pitch of Folly as even to burn Incenſe to Idols. *Job* had no Enemy more cruel than his Wife: What Temptations did he not bear? The evil Spirit who had declared himſelf his Perſecutor, employed a Woman as an Inſtrument to ſhake his Conſtancy. And the ſame evil Spirit made *Heloiſe* an Inſtrument to ruin *Abelard!* All the poor Comfort I have is, that I am not the voluntary Cauſe of your Misfortunes. I have not betrayed you; but my Conſtancy and Love have been deſtructive to you. If I have committed a Crime in having loved you with Conſtancy, I ſhall never be able to repent of that Crime. Indeed I gave myſelf up too much to the Captivity of thoſe ſoft Errors into which my riſing Paſſion ſeduced me. I have endeavoured to pleaſe you, even at the Expence of my Virtue, and therefore deſerve thoſe Pains I feel. My guilty Tranſports could not but have a tragical End. As ſoon as I was perſuaded of your Love, alas, I ſcarce delayed a Moment reſigning myſelf to all your Proteſtations: To be beloved by *Abelard*, was, in my Eſteem, too much Glory, and I too impatiently deſired it, not to believe it immediately. I endeavoured at Nothing but convincing you of my utmoſt Paſſion. I made no Uſe of thoſe Defences of Diſdain and Honour;

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thoſe Enemies of Pleaſure which tyrannize over our Sex, made in me but a weak and unprofitable Reſiſtance. I ſacrificed all to my Love, and I forced my Duty to give Place to the Ambition of making happy the moſt gallant and learned Perſon of the Age. If any Conſideration had been able to ſtop me, it would have been without Doubt the Intereſt of my Love. I feared leſt having Nothing further for you to deſire, your Paſſion might become languid, and you might ſeek for new Pleaſures in ſome new Conqueſt. But it was eaſy for you to cure me of a Suſpicion ſo oppoſite to my own Inclination. I ought to have foreſeen other more certain Evils, and to have conſidered that the Idea of loſt Enjoyments would be the Trouble of my whole Life.

How happy ſhould I be, could I waſh out with my Tears the Memory of thoſe Pleaſures, which yet I think of with Delight? At leaſt I will exert ſome generous Endeavour, and by ſmothering in my Heart thoſe Deſires to which the Frailty of my Nature may give Birth, I will exerciſe Torments upon myſelf, like thoſe the Rage of your Enemies has made you ſuffer. I will endeavour by that Means to ſatisfy you at leaſt, if I cannot appeaſe an angry God. For to ſhew you what a deplorable Condition I am in, and how far my Repentance is from being available, I dare even accuſe Heaven every Moment of Cruelty, for delivering you into thoſe Snares which were prepared for you. My Repinings kindle

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dle the Divine Wrath, when I ſhould endeavour to draw down Mercy.

In order to expiate a Crime, 'tis not ſufficient that we bear the Puniſhment; whatever we ſuffer is accounted as Nothing, if the Paſſions ſtill continue, and the Heart is enflamed with the ſame Deſires. 'Tis an eaſy Matter to confeſs a Weakneſs, and to inflict ſome Puniſhment upon ourſelves; but 'tis the laſt Violence to our Nature to extinguiſh the Memory of Pleaſures, which by a ſweet Habit have gained abſolute Poſſeſſion of our Minds. How many Perſons do we obſerve who make an outward Confeſſion of their Faults, yet far from being afflicted for them, take a new Pleaſure in the relating them. Bitterneſs of Heart ought to accompany the Confeſſion of the Mouth, yet that very rarely happens. I, who have experienced ſo many Pleaſures in loving you, feel, in ſpite of myſelf, that I cannot repent of them, nor forbear enjoying them over again as much as is poſſible, by recollecting them in my Memory. Whatever Endeavours I uſe, on whatever Side I turn me, the ſweet Idea ſtill purſues me, and every Object brings to my Mind what I ought to forget. During the ſtill Night, when my Heart ought to be quiet in the Midſt of Sleep, which ſuſpends the greateſt Diſturbances, I cannot avoid thoſe Illuſions my Heart entertains. I think I am ſtill with my dear *Abelard*. I ſee him, I ſpeak to him, and hear him anſwer. Charmed with each other, we quit our philoſophic Studies to entertain

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entertain ourſelves with our Paſſion. Sometimes too I ſeem to be a Witneſs of the bloody Enterprize of your Enemies; I oppoſe their Fury; I fill our Apartment with fearful Cries, and in the Moment I awake in Tears. Even into holy Places before the Altar I carry with me the Memory of our guilty Loves. They are my whole Buſineſs, and far from lamenting for having been ſeduced, I ſigh for having loſt them.

I remember (for Nothing is forgot by Lovers) the Time and Place in which you firſt declared your Love to me, and ſwore you would love me till Death. Your Words, your Oaths, are all deeply graven in my Heart. The Diſorder of my Diſcourſe diſcovers to every one the Trouble of my Mind. My Sighs betray me; and your Name is continually in my Mouth. When I am in this Condition, why doſt not thou, O Lord! pity my Weakneſs, and ſtrengthen me by thy Grace? You are happy, *Abelard*, this Grace has prevented you; and your Misfortune has been the Occaſion of your finding Reſt. The Puniſhment of your Body has cured the deadly Wounds of your Soul. The Tempeſt has driven you into the Haven. God, who ſeemed to lay his Hand heavily upon you, ſought only to help you; He is a Father chaſtizing, and not an Enemy revenging; a wiſe Phyſician, putting you to ſome Pain in order to preſerve your Life. I am a thouſand times more to be lamented than you; I have a thou-

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a thouſand Paſſions to combat with. I muſt reſiſt thoſe Fires which Love kindles in a young Heart. Our Sex is Nothing but Weakneſs, and I have the greater Difficulty to defend myſelf, becauſe the Enemy that attacks me pleaſes me; I doat on the Danger which threatens me, how then can I avoid falling?

In the Midſt of theſe Struggles, I endeavour at leaſt to conceal my Weakneſs from thoſe you have entruſted to my Care. All who are about me admire my Virtue, but could their Eyes penetrate into my Heart, what would they not diſcover? My Paſſions there are in a Rebellion; I preſide over others, but cannot rule myſelf. I have but a falſe Covering, and this ſeeming Virtue is a real Vice. Men judge me praiſe-worthy, but I am guilty before God, from whoſe All-ſeeing Eye Nothing is hid, and who views, through all their Foldings, the Secrets of all Hearts. I cannot eſcape his Diſcovery. And yet it is a great deal to me to maintain even this Appearance of Virtue. This troubleſome Hypocriſy is in ſome Sort commendable. I give no Scandal to the World, which is ſo eaſy to take bad Impreſſions. I do not ſhake the Virtue of theſe feeble Ones who are under my Conduct. With my Heart full of the Love of Man, I exhort them at leaſt to love only God: Charmed with the Pomp of worldly Pleaſures, I endeavour to ſhew them that they are all Deceit and Vanity. I have juſt Strength enough to conceal from them my Inclinations, and I look upon that as a power-

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a powerful Effect of Grace. If it is not ſufficient to make me embrace Virtue, 'tis enough to keep me from committing Sin.

And yet it is in vain to endeavour to ſeparate theſe two Things. They muſt be guilty who merit Nothing; and they depart from Virtue who delay to approach it. Beſides, we ought to have no other Motive than the Love of God; alas! what can I then hope for? I own, to my Confuſion, I fear more the offending a Man, than the provoking God, and ſtudy leſs to pleaſe him than you. Yes, 'twas your Command only, and not a ſincere Vocation, as is imagined, that ſhut me up in theſe Cloiſters. I ſought to give you Eaſe, and not to ſanctify myſelf. How unhappy am I? I tear myſelf from all that pleaſes me; I bury myſelf here alive, I exerciſe myſelf in the moſt rigid Faſtings, and ſuch Severities as cruel Laws impoſe on us; I feed myſelf with Tears and Sorrows; and notwithſtanding this I deſerve nothing for all the Hardſhips I ſuffer. My falſe Piety has long deceived you as well as others; you have thought me eaſy, yet I was more diſturbed than ever. You perſuaded yourſelf I was wholly taken up with my Duty, vet I had no Buſineſs but Love. Under this Miſtake you deſire my Prayers; alas! I muſt expect yours. Do not preſume upon my Virtue and my Care. I am wavering, and you muſt fix me by your Advice. I am yet feeble, you muſt ſuſtain and guide me by your Counſel.

What Occaſion had you to praiſe me? Praiſe

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Praiſe is often hurtful to thoſe on whom it is beſtowed. A ſecret Vanity ſprings up in the Heart, blinds us, and conceals from us Wounds that are ill cured. A Seducer flatters us, and at the ſame Time aims at our Deſtruction. A ſincere Friend diſguiſes Nothing from us, and far from paſſing a light Hand over the Wound, makes us feel it the more intenſely, by applying Remedies. Why do you not deal after this Manner with me? Will you be eſteemed a baſe dangerous Flatterer; or, if you chance to ſee any thing commendable in me, have you no Fear that Vanity, which is ſo natural to all Women, ſhould quite efface it? But let us not judge of Virtue by outward Appearances, for then the Reprobate as well as the Elect may lay Claim to it. An artful Impoſtor may by his Addreſs gain more Admiration, than the true Zeal of a Saint.

The Heart of Man is a Labyrinth whoſe Windings are very difficult to be diſcovered. The Praiſes you give me are the more dangerous, in regard that I love the Perſon who gives them. The more I deſire to pleaſe you, the readier am I to believe all the Merit you attribute to me. Ah, think rather how to ſupport my Weakneſſes by wholſome Remonſtrances! Be rather fearful than confident of my Salvation; ſay our Virtue is founded upon Weakneſs, and that thoſe only will be crowned who have fought with the greateſt Difficulties: But I ſeek not for that Crown which is the Reward of Victory, I am content to avoid only the

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the Danger. It is eaſier to keep off, than to win a Battle. There are ſeveral Degrees in Glory, and I am not ambitious of the higheſt; thoſe I leave to Souls of great Courage, who have been often victorious. I ſeek not to conquer, out of Fear leſt I ſhould be overcome. Happy enough, if I can eſcape Shipwreck, and at laſt gain the Port. Heaven commands me to renounce that fatal Paſſion which unites me to you; but oh! my Heart will never be able to conſent to it. Adieu.

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LETTER V.

HELOISE *to* ABELARD.

Heloiſe *had been dangerouſly ill at the Convent of the* Paraclete: *Immediately upon her Recovery, ſhe wrote this Letter to* Abelard. *She ſeems now to have diſengaged herſelf from him, and to have reſolved to think of Nothing but Repentance; yet diſcovers ſome Emotions, which make it doubtful whether Devotion had entirely triumphed over her Paſſion.*

DEAR *Abelard*, you expect perhaps that I ſhould accuſe you of Negligence. You have not anſwered my laſt Letter, and Thanks to Heaven in the Condition I now am, 'tis a Happineſs to me that you ſhew ſo much Inſenſibility for the fatal Paſſion which had engaged me to you; at laſt, *Abelard*, you have loſt *Heloiſe* for ever: Notwithſtanding all the Oaths I made to think of Nothing but you only, and to be entertained with Nothing but you, I have baniſhed you from my Thoughts, I have forgot you. Thou charming Idea of a Lover I once adored, thou wilt no more be my Happineſs! Dear Image of *Abelard!* thou wilt no more follow me every where, I will no more remember thee. O celebrated Merit of a Man, who in ſpite of his Enemies, is the Wonder of his Age! O enchanting Pleaſures

to

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which *Heloiſe* entirely reſigned herſelf, you, you have been my Tormentors. I confeſs, *Abelard*, without a Bluſh, my Infidelity: Let my Inconſtancy teach the World that there is no depending upon the Promiſes of Women; they are all ſubject to change. This troubles you, *Abelard*; this News without Doubt ſurprizes you; you could never imagine *Heloiſe* ſhould be inconſtant. She was prejudiced by ſo ſtrong an Inclination to you, that you cannot conceive how Time could alter it. But be undeceived, I am going to diſcover to you my Falſeneſs, though inſtead of reproaching me, I perſuade myſelf you will ſhed Tears of Joy. When I ſhall have told you what Rival hath raviſhed my Heart from you, you will praiſe my Inconſtancy, and will pray this Rival to fix it: By this you may judge that 'tis God alone that takes *Heloiſe* from you. Yes, my dear *Abelard*, he gives my Mind that Tranquillity which a quick Remembrance of our Misfortunes would not ſuffer me to enjoy. Juſt Heaven! What other Rival could take me from you? Could you imagine it poſſible for any Mortal to blot you from my Heart? Could you think me guilty of ſacrificing the virtuous and learned *Abelard* to any other but to God? No, I believe you have done me Juſtice in this Point. I queſtion not but you are impatient to know what Means God uſed to accompliſh ſo great an End; I will tell you, and wonder at the ſecret Ways of Providence. Some few Days after you ſent me your laſt Letter I fell dangerouſly ill, the Phyſicians gave me over;

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and I expected certain Death. Then it was, that my Passion, which always before seemed innocent, appeared criminal to me. My Memory represented faithfully to me all the past Actions of my Life, and I confess to you, my Love was the only Pain I felt. Death, which till then I had always considered as at a Distance, now presented itself to me such as it appears to Sinners. I began to dread the Wrath of God, now I was going to experience it; and I repented I had made no better Use of his Grace. Those tender Letters I have wrote to you, and those passionate Conversations I have had with you, gave me as much Pain now, as they formerly did Pleasure. Ah! miserable *Heloise*, said I, if it is a Crime to give oneself up to such soft Transports; and if after this Life is ended, Punishment certainly follows them, why didst thou not resist so dangerous an Inclination? Think on the Tortures that are prepared for thee, consider with Terror that Store of Torments, and recollect at the same Time those Pleasures which thy deluded Soul thought so entrancing. Ah, pursued I, dost thou not almost despair for having rioted in such false Pleasures? In short, *Abelard*, imagine all the Remorse of Mind I suffered, and you will not be astonished at my Change.

Solitude is insupportable to a Mind which is not easy; its Troubles increase in the Midst of Silence, and Retirement heightens them. Since I have been shut up within these Walls, I have done nothing but weep for our Misfortunes. This Cloister has resounded with my Cries,

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Cries, and like a Wretch condemned to eternal Slavery, I have worn out my Days in Grief and Sighing. Inſtead of fulfilling God's merciful Deſign upon me, I have offended him; I have looked upon this ſacred Refuge, like a frightful Priſon, and have borne with Unwillingneſs the Yoke of the Lord. Inſtead of ſanctifying myſelf by a Life of Penitence, I have confirmed my Reprobation. What a fatal Wandering! But, *Abelard*, I have torn off the Bandage which blinded me, and if I dare rely upon the Emotions which I have felt, I have made myſelf worthy of your Eſteem. You are no more that amorous *Abelard*, who, to gain a private Converſation with me by Night, uſed inceſſantly to contrive new Ways to deceive the Vigilance of our Obſervers. The Misfortune which happened to you after ſo many happy Moments gave you a Horror for Vice, and you inſtantly conſecrated the reſt of your Days to Virtue, and ſeemed to ſubmit to this Neceſſity willingly. I indeed, more tender than you, and more ſenſible of ſoft Pleaſures, bore this Misfortune with extreme Impatience; you have heard my Exclamations againſt your Enemies. You have ſeen my whole Reſentment in thoſe Letters I wrote to you. 'Twas this without Doubt which deprived me of the Eſteem of my *Abelard*: You were alarmed at my Tranſports, and if you will confeſs the Truth, you, perhaps, deſpaired of my Salvation. You could not foreſee that *Heloiſe* would conquer ſo reigning a Paſſion; but you have been deceived,

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Abelard; my Weakneſs, when ſupported by Grace, hath not hindered me from obtaining a compleat Victory. Reſtore me then to your good Opinion; your own Piety ought to ſolicit you to this.

But what ſecret Trouble riſes in my Soul, what unthought-of Motion oppoſes the Reſolution I formed of Sighing no more for *Abelard?* Juſt Heaven! Have I not yet triumphed over my Love? Unhappy *Heloiſe!* as long as thou draweſt a Breath it is decreed thou muſt love *Abelard*; weep, unfortunate Wretch that thou art, thou never hadſt a more juſt Occaſion. Now I ought to die with Grief; Grace had overtaken me, and I had promiſed to be faithful to it, but I now perjure myſelf, and ſacrifice even Grace to *Abelard.* This ſacrilegious Sacrifice fills up the Meaſure of my Iniquities. After this can I hope God ſhould open to me the Treaſures of his Mercy? Have I not tired out his Forgiveneſs? I began to offend him from the Moment I firſt ſaw *Abelard*; an unhappy Sympathy engaged us both in a criminal Commerce; and God raiſed us up an Enemy to ſeparate us. I lament and hate the Misfortune which hath lighted upon us, and adore the Cauſe. Ah! I ought rather to explain this Accident as the ſecret Ordinance of Heaven, which diſapproved of our Engagement, and apply myſelf to extirpate my Paſſion. How much better were it intirely to forget the Object of it, than to preſerve the Memory of it, ſo fatal to the Quiet of my Life, and Salvation? Great God! Shall *Abelard*

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lard always poſſeſs my Thought, can I never free myſelf from thoſe Chains which bind me to him? But perhaps I am unreaſonably afraid; Virtue directs all my Motions, and they are all ſubject to Grace. Fear no more, dear *Abelard*, I have no longer any of thoſe Sentiments, which being deſcribed in my Letters have occaſioned you ſo much Trouble. I will no more endeavour, by the Relation of thoſe Pleaſures, our new-born Paſſion gave us, to awaken that criminal Fondneſs you may have for me. I free you from all your Oaths; forget the Names of Lover and Huſband, but keep always that of Father. I expect no more from you thoſe tender Proteſtations, and thoſe Letters ſo proper to keep up the Commerce of Love. I demand Nothing of you but ſpiritual Advice and wholeſome Directions. The Path of Holineſs, however thorny it may be, will yet appear agreeable when I walk in your Steps. You will always find me ready to follow you. I ſhall read with more Pleaſure the Letters in which you ſhall deſcribe to me the Advantages of Virtue, than ever I did thoſe by which you ſo artfully inſtilled the fatal Poiſon of our Paſſion. You cannot now be ſilent, without a Crime. When I was poſſeſſed with ſo violent a Love, and preſſed you ſo earneſtly to write to me, how many Letters did I ſend you before I could obtain one from you? You denied me in my Miſery the only Comfort which was left me, becauſe you thought it pernicious. You endeavoured by Severities to force me to forget you; nor can

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I blame you; but now you have Nothing to fear. A lucky Diſeaſe, which Providence ſeemed to have chaſtiſed me with for my Sanctification, hath done what all human Efforts, and your Cruelty, in vain attempted. I ſee now the Vanity of that Happineſs which we had ſet our Hearts upon, as if we were never to have loſt it. What Fears, what Uneaſineſs have we been obliged to ſuffer!

No, Lord, there is no Pleaſure upon Earth, but that which Virtue gives! The Heart amidſt all worldly Delights feels a Sting; 'tis uneaſy, and reſtleſs till fixed on thee. What have I not ſuffered, *Abelard*, while I kept alive in my Retirement thoſe Fires which ruined me in the World? I ſaw with Horror the Walls which ſurround me, the Hours ſeemed as long as Years. I repented a thouſand Times the having buried myſelf here. But ſince Grace has opened my Eyes all the Scene is changed. Solitude looks charming, and the Tranquillity which I behold here enters my very Heart. In the Satisfaction of doing my Duty I feel a Pleaſure, above all that Riches, Pomp, or Senſuality could afford. My Quiet has indeed coſt me dear, I have bought it even at the Price of my Love, I have offered a violent Sacrifice, and which ſeemed above my Power. I have torn you from my Heart, and be not jealous; God reigns there in your Stead, who ought always to have poſſeſſed it intire. Be content with having a Place in my Mind, which you ſhall never loſe; I ſhall always take a ſecret Pleaſure

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Pleaſure in thinking of you, and eſteem it a Glory to obey thoſe Rules you ſhall give me.

This very Moment I receive a Letter from you; I will read it, and anſwer it immediately. You ſhall ſee by my Exactneſs in writing to you, that you are always dear to me.——You very obligingly reproach me for delaying ſo long to write you any News: My Illneſs muſt excuſe that. I omit no Opportunities of giving you Marks of my Remembrance. I thank you for the Uneaſineſs you ſay my Silence cauſed you, and the kind Fears you expreſs concerning my Health. Yours, you tell me, is but weakly, and you thought lately you ſhould have died. With what Indifference, cruel Man, do you acquaint me with a Thing ſo certain to afflict me? I told you in my former Letter how unhappy I ſhould be if you died; and if you loved me, you would moderate the Rigour of your auſtere Life. I repreſented to you the Occaſion I had for your Advice, and conſequently the Reaſon there was you ſhould take Care of yourſelf. But I will not tire you with the Repetition of the ſame Things. *You deſire us not to forget you in our Prayers.* Ah, dear *Abelard*, you may depend upon the Zeal of this Society, 'tis devoted to you, and you cannot juſtly charge it with Forgetfulneſs. You are our Father, we your Children: You are our Guide, and we reſign ourſelves with Aſſurance in your Piety. You command, we obey; we faithfully execute what you have prudently directed. We impoſe no Penance on ourſelves but what you

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recommend, leſt we ſhould rather follow an indiſcreet Zeal than ſolid Virtue. In a Word, Nothing is thought rightly done, if without *Abelard*'s Approbation. You inform me of one Thing that perplexes me, that you have heard that ſome of our Siſters gave bad Examples, and that there is a general Looſeneſs amongſt them. Ought this to ſeem ſtrange to you, who know how Monaſteries are filled now-a-days? Do Fathers conſult the Inclinations of their Children when they ſettle them? Are not Intereſt and Policy their only Rules? This is the Reaſon that Monaſteries are often filled with thoſe who are a Scandal to them. But I conjure you to tell me what are the Irregularities you have heard of, and to teach me a proper Remedy for them. I have not yet obſerved that Looſeneſs you mention; when I have, I will take due Care. I walk my Rounds every Night, and make thoſe I catch abroad return to their Chambers; for I remember all the Adventures which happened in the Monaſteries near *Paris*. You end your Letter with a general deploring of your Unhappineſs, and wiſh for Death as the End of a troubleſome Life. Is it poſſible a Genius ſo great as yours ſhould never get above his paſt Misfortunes? What would the World ſay ſhould they read your Letters as I do? Would they conſider the noble Motive of your Retirement, or not rather think you had ſhut yourſelf up only to lament the Condition to which my Uncle's Revenge had reduced you? What would your young Pupils ſay who come ſo far to hear you,

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and prefer your ſevere Lectures to the Softneſs of a worldly Life, if they ſhould ſee you ſecretly a Slave to your Paſſions, and ſenſible of all thoſe Weakneſſes from which your Rules can ſecure them? This *Abelard* they ſo much admire, this great Perſonage which guides them, would loſe his Fame, and become the Scorn of his Pupils. If theſe Reaſons are not ſufficient to give you Conſtancy in your Misfortunes, caſt your Eyes upon me, and admire my Reſolution of ſhutting myſelf up by your Example. I was young when we were ſeparated, and (if I dare believe what you were always telling me) worthy of any Gentleman's Affections. If I had loved Nothing in *Abelard* but ſenſual Pleaſure, a thouſand agreeable young Men might have comforted me upon my Loſs of him. You know what I have done, excuſe me therefore from repeating it; think of thoſe Aſſurances I gave you of loving you with the utmoſt Tenderneſs. I dried your Tears with Kiſſes, and becauſe you were leſs powerful I became leſs reſerved. Ah, if you had loved with Delicacy, the Oaths I made, the Tranſports I accompanied them with, the innocent Careſſes I profuſely gave you, all this ſure might have comforted you. Had you obſerved me to grow by Degrees indifferent to you, you might have had Reaſon to deſpair, but you never received greater Marks of my Paſſion, than after that cruel Revenge upon you.

Let me ſee no more in your Letters, dear *Abelard*, ſuch Murmurs againſt Fortune; you are not the only one ſhe has perſecuted, and

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you ought to forget her Outrages. What a Shame is it for a Philoſopher not to be comforted for an Accident which might happen to any Man! Govern yourſelf by my Example. I was born with violent Paſſions; I daily ſtrive with the moſt tender Emotions, and glory in triumphing and ſubjecting them to Reaſon: Muſt a weak Mind fortify one that is ſo much ſuperior? But whither am I tranſported? Is this Diſcourſe directed to my dear *Abelard?* One that practiſes all thoſe Virtues he teaches? If you complain of Fortune, 'tis not ſo much that you feel her Strokes, as that you cannot ſhew your Enemies how much to blame they were in attempting to hurt you. Leave them, *Abelard*, to exhauſt their Malice, and continue to charm your Auditors. Diſcover thoſe Treaſures of Learning Heaven ſeems to have reſerved for you; your Enemies, ſtruck with the Splendor of your Reaſoning, will do you Juſtice. How happy ſhould I be could I ſee all the World as entirely perſuaded of your Probity as I am. Your Learning is allowed by all the World; your greateſt Enemies confeſs you are ignorant of Nothing that the Mind of Man is capable of knowing.

My dear Huſband! (this is the laſt Time I ſhall uſe that Expreſſion) ſhall I never ſee you again? Shall I never have the Pleaſure of embracing you before Death? What doſt thou ſay, wretched *Heloiſe?* Doſt thou know what thou deſireſt? Canſt thou behold thoſe lively Eyes without recollecting thoſe amorous Glances which have been ſo fatal to thee? Canſt thou view

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view that majeſtic Air of *Abelard*, without entertaining a Jealouſy of every one that ſees ſo charming a Man? that Mouth, which cannot be looked upon without Deſire; in ſhort, all the Perſon of *Abelard* cannot be viewed by any Woman without Danger. Deſire therefore no more to ſee *Abelard*; if the Memory of him has cauſed thee ſo much Trouble, *Heloiſe*, what will not his Preſence do? What Deſires will it not excite in thy Soul? How will it be poſſible for thee to keep thy Reaſon at the Sight of ſo amiable a Man? I will own to you what makes the greateſt Pleaſure I have in my Retirement. After having paſſed the Day in thinking of you, full of the dear Idea, I give myſelf up at Night to Sleep: Then it is that *Heloiſe*, who dares not without trembling think of you by Day, reſigns herſelf entirely to the Pleaſure of hearing you, and ſpeaking to you. I ſee you, *Abelard*, and glut my Eyes with the Sight. Sometimes you entertain me with the Story of your ſecret Troubles and Grievances, and create in me a ſenſible Sorrow; ſometimes forgetting the perpetual Obſtacles to our Deſires, you preſs me to make you happy, and I eaſily yield to your Tranſports. Sleep gives you what your Enemies Rage has deprived you of; and our Souls, animated with the ſame Paſſion, are ſenſible of the ſame Pleaſure. But oh you delightful Illuſions, ſoft Errors, how ſoon do you vaniſh away? At my awaking I open my Eyes and ſee no *Abelard*; I ſtretch out my Arm to take hold of him, but he is not there; I call him, he hears me not.

What;

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What a Fool am I to tell you my Dreams, who are insensible of these Pleasures? But do you, *Abelard*, never see *Heloise* in your Sleep? How does she appear to you? Do you entertain her with the same tender Language as formerly, when *Fulbert* committed her to your Care? When you awake, are your pleased or sorry? Pardon me, *Abelard*, pardon a mistaken Lover. I must no more expect that Vivacity from you, which once animated all your Actions. 'Tis no more Time to require from you a perfect Correspondence of Desires. We have bound ourselves to severe Austerities, and must follow them, let them cost us never so dear. Let us think of our Duties in these Rigours, and make a good Use of that Necessity which keeps us separate. You, *Abelard*, will happily finish your Course, your Desires and Ambitions will be no Obstacles to your Salvation. *Heloise* only must lament, she only must weep without being certain whether all her Tears will be available or not to her Salvation.

I had like to have ended my Letter without acquainting you with what happened here a few Days ago. A young Nun, who was one of those who are forced to take up with a Convent without any Examination whether it will suit with their Tempers or not, is, by a Stratagem I know Nothing of, escaped, and, as they say, fled with a young Gentleman she was in Love with into *England*. I have ordered all the House to conceal the Matter. Ah *Abelard!* if you were near us these Disorders would not happen. All the Sisters, charmed with seeing

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and hearing you, would think of Nothing but practising your Rules and Directions. The young Nun had never formed so criminal a Design as that of breaking her Vows, had you been at our Head to exhort us to live holily. If your Eyes were Witnesses of our Actions, they would be innocent. When we slipt, you would lift us up and establish us by your Counsels; we should march with sure Steps in the rough Paths of Virtue. I begin to perceive, *Abelard*, that I take too much Pleasure in writing to you. I ought to burn my Letter. It shews you I am still engaged in a deep Passion for you, tho' at the Beginning of it I designed to persuade you the of contrary; I am sensible of the Motions both of Grace and Passion, and by Turns yield to each. Have Pity, *Abelard*, of the Condition to which you have brought me, and make in some measure the latter Days of my Life as quiet, as the first have been uneasy and disturbed.

LET-

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LETTER VI.

ABELARD *to* HELOISE.

Abelard *having at last conquered the Remains of his unhappy Passion, had determined to put an End to so dangerous a Correspondence as that between* Heloise *and himself. The following Letter therefore, though written with no less Concern than his former, is free from Mixtures of a worldly Passion, and is full of the warmest Sentiments of Piety, and the most moving Exhortations.*

WRITE no more to me, *Heloise*, write no more to me; 'tis Time to end a Commerce which makes our Mortifications of no Advantage to us. We retired from the World to sanctify ourselves; and by a Conduct directly contrary to Christian Morality we become odious to Jesus Christ. Let us no more deceive ourselves; by flattering ourselves with the Remembrance of our past Pleasures we shall make our Lives troublesome, and we shall be incapable of relishing the Sweets of Solitude. Let us make a good Use of our Austerities, and no longer preserve the Ideas of our Crimes amongst the Severities of Penitence. Let a Mortification of Body and Mind, a strict Fasting, continual Solitude, profound and holy Meditations, and a sincere Love

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Love of God, ſucceed our former Irregularities.

Let us try to carry religious Perfection to a very difficult Point. 'Tis beautiful to find in Chriſtianity Minds ſo diſengaged from the Earth, from the Creatures and themſelves, that they ſeem to act independently of thoſe Bodies they are joined to, and to uſe them as their Slaves. We can never raiſe ourſelves to too great Heights, when God is the Object. Be our Endeavours never ſo great, they will always come ſhort of reaching that exalted Divinity, which even our Apprehenſions cannot reach. Let us act for God's Glory, independent of the Creatures or ourſelves, without any Regard to our own Deſires, or the Sentiments of others. Were we in this Temper of Mind, *Heloiſe*, I would willingly make my Abode at the *Paraclete*. My earneſt Care for a Houſe I have founded, would draw a thouſand Bleſſings on it. I would inſtruct it by my Words, and animate it by my Example. I would watch over the Lives of my Siſters, and would command Nothing but what I myſelf would perform. I would direct you to pray, meditate, labour, and keep Vows of Silence; and I would myſelf pray, meditate, labour, and be ſilent.

However when I ſpoke, it ſhould be to lift you up when you ſhould fall, to ſtrengthen you in your Weakneſſes, to enlighten you in that Darkneſs and Obſcurity which might at any Time ſurprize you. I would comfort you under thoſe Severities uſed by Perſons of great Virtue.

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Virtue. I would moderate the Vivacity of your Zeal and Piety, and give your Virtue an even Temperament: I would point out those Duties which you ought to know, and satisfy you in those Doubts which the Weakness of your Reason might occasion. I would be your Master and Father; and by a marvellous Talent, I would become lively, slow, soft, or severe, according to the different Characters of those I should guide in the painful Path of Christian Perfection.

But whither does my vain Imagination carry me? Ah, *Heloise*, how far are we from such a happy Temper? Your Heart still burns with that fatal Fire which you cannot extinguish, and mine is full of Trouble and Uneasiness. Think not, *Heloise*, that I enjoy here a perfect Peace; I will, for the last Time, open my Heart to you; I am not yet disengaged from you; I fight against my excessive Tenderness for you, yet in Spite of all Endeavours, the remaining Frailty makes me but too sensible of your Sorrows, and gives me a Share in them. Your Letters have indeed moved me, I could not read with Indifference Characters wrote by that dear Hand. I sigh, I weep, and all my Reason is scarce sufficient to conceal my Weakness from my Pupils. This, unhappy *Heloise!* is the miserable Condition of *Abelard:* The World, which generally errs in its Notions, thinks I am easy, and as if I had loved only in you the Gratification of Sense, imagines I have now forgot you; but what a Mistake is this! People indeed did not

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not mistake in thinking when we separated, that Shame and Grief for having been so cruelly used made me abandon the World. 'Twas not, as you know, a sincere Repentance for having offended God, which inspired me with a Design of retiring: However, I considered the Accident which happened to us as a secret Design of Providence, to punish our Crimes; and only looked upon *Fulbert* as the Instrument of divine Vengeance. Grace drew me into an *Asylum*, where I might yet have remained, if the Rage of my Enemies would have permitted: I have endured all their Persecutions, not doubting but God himself raised them up in order to purify me.

When he saw me perfectly obedient to his holy Will, he permitted that I should justify my Doctrine; I made its Purity public, and shewed in the End that my Faith was not only orthodox, but also perfectly clear from even the Suspicion of Novelty.

I should be happy if I had none to fear but my Enemies, and no other Hindrance to my Salvation but their Calumny; but, *Heloise*, you make me Trouble; your Letters declare to me that your are enslaved to a fatal Passion; and yet if you cannot conquer it, you cannot be saved; and what Part would you have me take in this Case? Would you have me stifle the Inspirations of the Holy Ghost? Shall I, to sooth you, dry up those Tears which the Evil Spirit makes you shed? Shall this be the Fruit of my Meditations? No: let us be more firm in our Resolutions; we have not retired

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retired but in order to lament our Sins, and to gain Heaven; let us then resign ourselves to God with all our Heart.

I know every thing in the Beginning is difficult, but it is glorious to undertake the Beginning of a great Action, and that Glory increases proportionably, as the Difficulties are more considerable. We ought upon this Account to surmount bravely all Obstacles which might hinder us in the Practice of Christian Virtue. In a Monastery Men are proved as Gold in the Furnace. No one can continue long there, unless he bear worthily the Yoke of our Lord.

Attempt to break those shameful Chains which bind you to the Flesh, and if by the Assistance of Grace you are so happy as to accomplish this, I entreat you to think of me in your Prayers. Endeavour with all your Strength to be the Pattern of a perfect Christian; it is difficult, I confess, but not impossible; and I expect this beautiful Triumph from your teachable Disposition. If your first Endeavours prove weak, give not yourself up to Despair; that would be Cowardice; besides, I would have you informed, that you must necessarily take great Pains, because you strive to conquer a terrible Enemy, to extinguish raging Fire, and to reduce to Subjection your dearest Affections; you must fight against your own Desires, be not therefore pressed down with the Weight of your corrupt Nature. You have to do with a cunning Adversary, who will use all Means to seduce you; be

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be always upon your Guard. While we live we are expoſed to Temptations; this made a great Saint ſay, that *the whole Life of Man was a Temptation*; the Devil, who never ſleeps, walks continually around us, in order to ſurprize us on ſome unguarded Side, and enters into our Soul to deſtroy it.

However perfect any one may be, yet he may fall into Temptations, and perhaps into ſuch as may be uſeful. Nor is it wonderful that Man ſhould never be exempt from them, becauſe he hath always within himſelf their Source, Concupiſcence; ſcarce are we delivered from one Temptation, but another attacks us. Such is the Lot of the Poſterity of *Adam*, that they ſhould always have ſomething to ſuffer, becauſe they have forfeited their primitive Happineſs. We vainly flatter ourſelves that we ſhall conquer Temptations by flying; if we join not Patience and Humility, we ſhall torment ourſelves to no Purpoſe. We ſhall more certainly compaſs our End by imploring God's Aſſiſtance, than by uſing any Means drawn from ourſelves.

Be conſtant, *Heloiſe*, truſt in God, and you will fall into few Temptations; whenever they ſhall come, ſtifle them in their Birth; let them not take Root in your Heart. Apply Remedies to a Diſeaſe, ſaid an Ancient, in its Beginning, for when it hath gained Strength, Medicines will be unavailable; Temptations have their Degrees, they are at firſt mere Thoughts, and do not appear dangerous; the Imagination receives them without any Fears; a Pleaſure is formed

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formed out of them, we pauſe upon it, and at laſt we yield to it.

Do you now, *Heloiſe*, applaud my Deſign of making you walk in the Steps of the Saints? Do my Words give you any Reliſh for Penitence? Have you not Remorſe for your Wanderings, and do you not wiſh you could, like *Magdalen*, waſh our Saviour's Feet with your Tears? If you have not yet theſe ardent Emotions, pray that he would inſpire them. I ſhall never ceaſe to recommend you in my Prayers, and always beſeech him to aſſiſt you in your Deſign of dying holily. You have quitted the World, and what Object was worthy to detain you there? Lift up your Eyes always to him to whom you have conſecrated the reſt of your Days. Life upon this Earth is Miſery. The very Neceſſities to which our Body is ſubject here, are Matter of Affliction to a Saint. *Lord*, ſaid the Royal Prophet, *deliver me from my Neceſſities!* They are wretched who do not know themſelves for ſuch, and yet they are more wretched who know their Miſery, and do not hate the Corruption of the Age. What Fools are Men to engage themſelves to earthly Things! They will be undeceived one Day, and will know but too late how much they have been to blame in loving ſuch falſe Good. Perſons truly pious do not thus miſtake, they are diſengaged from all ſenſual Pleaſures, and raiſe their Deſires to Heaven. Begin, *Heloiſe*; put your Deſign in Execution without Delay; you have yet Time enough to work out your Salvation. Love Chriſt, and deſpiſe yourſelf for

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for his Sake. He would poſſeſs your Heart, and be the ſole Object of your Sighs and Tears; ſeek for no Comfort but in him. If you do not free yourſelf from me, you will fall with me; but if you quit me, and give up yourſelf to him, you will be ſtedfaſt and immoveable. If you force the Lord to forſake you, you will fall into Diſtreſs; but if you be ever faithful to him, you will be always in Joy. *Magdalen* wept, as thinking the Lord had forſaken her; but *Martha* ſaid, See, the Lord calls you; be diligent in your Duty, and obey faithfully the Motions of his Grace, and Jeſus will remain always with you.

Attend, *Heloiſe*, to ſome Inſtructions I have to give you: You are at the Head of a Society, and you know there is this Difference between thoſe who lead a private Life, and ſuch as are charged with the Conduct of others; that the firſt need only labour for their own Sanctification, and in acquitting themſelves of their Duties are not obliged to practiſe all the Virtues in ſuch an apparent Manner; whereas they who have the Conduct of others intruſted to them, ought by their Example to engage them to do all the good they are capable of in their Condition. I beſeech you to attend to this Truth, and ſo to follow it, as that your whole Life may be a perfect Model of that of a religious Recluſe.

God, who heartily deſires our Salvation, hath made all the Means of it eaſy to us. In the *Old Teſtament* he hath written in the Tables of the Law what he requires of us, that we might

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might not be bewildered in seeking after his Will. In the *New Testament* he hath written that Law of Grace in our Hearts, to the Intent that it might be always present with us; and knowing the Weakness and Incapacity of our Nature, he hath given us Grace to perform his Will; and as this were not enough, he hath at all Times, in all States of the Church, raised up Men, who by their exemplary Life might excite others to their Duty. To effect this, he hath chosen Persons of every Age, Sex, and Condition. Strive now to unite in yourself all those Virtues which have been scattered in these different States. Have the Purity of Virgins, the Austerity of Anchorites, the Zeal of Pastors and Bishops, and the Constancy of Martyrs. Be exact in the Course of your whole Life to fulfil the Duties of a holy and enlightened Superior, and then Death, which is commonly considered as terrible, will appear agreeable to you.

The Death of his Saints, says the Prophet, *is precious in the Sight of the Lord.* Nor is it difficult to comprehend why their Death should have this Advantage over that of Sinners. I have remarked three Things which might have given the Prophet an Occasion of speaking thus. First, their Resignation to the Will of God. Secondly, the Continuation of their good Works. And lastly, the Triumph they gain over the Devil.

A Saint who has accustomed himself to submit to the Will of God, yields to Death without Reluctance. He waits with Joy (says St.

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Gregory) for the Judge who is to reward him, he fears not to quit this miſerable mortal Life, in order to begin an immortal happy one. It is not ſo with the Sinner, ſays the ſame Father; he fears, and with Reaſon, he trembles at the Approach of the leaſt Sickneſs; Death is terrible to him, becauſe he cannot bear the Preſence of an offended Judge, and having ſo often abuſed the Grace of God, he ſees no Way to avoid the Puniſhment due to his Sins.

The Saints have beſides this Advantage over Sinners, that having made Works of Piety familiar to them during their Life, they exerciſe them without Trouble, and having gained new Strength againſt the Devil every Time they overcame him, they will find themſelves in a Condition at the Hour of Death to obtain that Victory over him, on which depends all Eternity, and the bleſſed Union of their Souls with their Creator.

I hope, *Heloiſe*, that after having deplored the Irregularities of your paſt Life, you will die (as the Prophet prayed) the Death of the Righteous. Ah how few are there who make their End after this Manner! And why? It is becauſe there are ſo few who love the Croſs of Chriſt. Every one would be ſaved, but few will uſe thoſe Means which Religion preſcribes: And yet we can be ſaved by Nothing but the Croſs, why then do we refuſe to bear it? Hath not our Saviour borne it before us, and died for us, to the End that we might alſo bear it, and deſire to die alſo? All the Saints have been afflicted, and our Saviour himſelf did not paſs one

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one Hour of his Life without ſome Sorrow. Hope not therefore to be exempted from Sufferings. The Croſs, *Heloiſe*, is always at hand, but take Care that you do not bear it with Regret, for by ſo doing you will make it more heavy, and you will be oppreſſed by it unprofitably. On the contrary, if you bear it with Affection and Courage, all your Sufferings will create in you a holy Confidence, whereby you will find Comfort in God. Hear our Saviour, who ſays, My Child, renounce yourſelf, *take up your Croſs and follow me*. Oh *Heloiſe!* do you doubt? Is not your Soul raviſhed at ſo ſaving a Command? Are you deaf to his Voice? Are you inſenſible to Words ſo full of Kindneſs? Beware, *Heloiſe*, of refuſing a Huſband who demands you, and is more to be feared, if you ſlight his Affection, than any profane Lover. Provoked at your Contempt and Ingratitude, he will turn his Love into Anger, and make you feel his Vengeance. How will you ſuſtain his Preſence, when you ſhall ſtand before his Tribunal? He will reproach you for having deſpiſed his Grace; he will repreſent to you his Sufferings for you. What Anſwer can you make? He will then be implacable. He will ſay to you, Go, proud Creature, dwell in everlaſting Flames; I ſeparated you from the World to purify you in Solitude, and you did not ſecond my Deſign, I endeavoured to ſave you, and you took Pains to deſtroy yourſelf: Go, Wretch, and take the Portion of the Reprobates.

Oh, *Heloiſe*, prevent theſe terrible Words, and

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and avoid by a holy Courſe the Puniſhment prepared for Sinners. I dare not give you a Deſcription of thoſe dreadful Torments which are the Conſequences of a Life of Guilt. I am filled with Horror, when they offer themſelves to my Imagination: And yet, *Heloiſe*, I can conceive Nothing which can reach the Tortures of the Damned; the Fire which we ſee upon Earth, is but the Shadow of that which burns them; and without enumerating their endleſs Pains, the Loſs of God which they feel increaſes all their Torments. Can any one ſin who is perſuaded of this? My God! Can we dare to offend thee? Though the Riches of thy Mercy could not engage us to love thee, the Dread of being thrown into ſuch an Abyſs of Miſery ſhould reſtrain us from doing any thing which might diſpleaſe Thee!

I queſtion not, *Heloiſe*, but you will hereafter apply yourſelf in good Earneſt to the Buſineſs of your Salvation: This ought to be your whole Concern. Baniſh me therefore for ever from your Heart; 'tis the beſt Advice I can give you: For the Remembrance of a Perſon we have loved criminally cannot but be hurtful, whatever Advances we have made in the Ways of Virtue. When you have extirpated your unhappy Inclination towards me, the Practice of every Virtue will become eaſy; and when at laſt your Life is conformable to that of Chriſt, Death will be deſirable to you. Your Soul will joyfully leave this Body, and direct its Flight to Heaven. Then you will appear with Confidence before your Saviour:

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You will not read Characters of your Reprobation written in the Book of Life; but you will hear your Saviour ſay, Come, partake of my Glory, and enjoy the eternal Reward I have appointed for thoſe Virtues you have practiſed.

Farewel, *Heloiſe*. This is the laſt Advice of your dear *Abelard*; this the laſt Time, let me perſuade you to follow the holy Rules of the Goſpel. Heaven grant that your Heart, once ſo ſenſible of my Love, may now yield to be directed by my Zeal! May the Idea of your loving *Abelard*, always preſent to your Mind, be now changed into the Image of *Abelard*, truly penitent; and may you ſhed as many Tears for your Salvation, as you have done during the Courſe of our Misfortunes!

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ELOISA
TO
ABELARD.

By Mr. POPE.

IN theſe deep Solitudes and aweful Cells,
Where heav'nly-penſive Contemplation dwells,
And ever-muſing Melancholy reigns;
What means this Tumult in a Veſtal's Veins?
Why rove my Thoughts beyond this laſt Retreat?
Why feels my Heart its long forgotten Heat?
Yet, yet I love!——From *Abelard* it came,
And *Eloïſa* yet muſt kiſs the Name.

Dear fatal Name! reſt ever unreveal'd,
Nor paſs theſe Lips in holy Silence ſeal'd:
Hide it, my Heart, within that cloſe Diſguiſe,
Where mix'd with God's, his lov'd Idea lies:
Oh write it not, my Hand——the Name appears
Already written——waſh it out, my Tears!
In vain loſt *Eloïſa* weeps and prays,
Her Heart ſtill dictates, and her Hand obeys.

Relentleſs Walls! whoſe darkſome Round contains
Repentant Sighs, and voluntary Pains:

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Ye rugged Rocks! which holy Knees have worn;
Ye Grots and Caverns ſhagg'd with horrid Thorn!
Shrines! where their Vigils pale-ey'd Virgins keep,
And pitying Saints, whoſe Statues learn to weep!
Tho' cold like you, unmov'd and ſilent grown,
I have not yet forgot myſelf to Stone.
Heav'n claims me all in vain, while he has Part,
Still Rebel Nature holds out Half my Heart;
Nor Pray'rs nor Faſts its ſtubborn Pulſe reſtrain,
Nor Tears, for Ages, taught to flow in vain.

Soon as thy Letters trembling I unclоſe,
That well-known Name awakens all my Woes.
Oh Name for ever ſad! for ever dear!
Still breath'd in Sighs, ſtill uſher'd with a Tear.
I tremble too where'er my own I find,
Some dire Misfortune follows cloſe behind.
Line after Line my guſhing Eyes o'erflow,
Led through a ſad Variety of Woe:
Now warm in Love, now with'ring in thy Bloom,
Loſt in a Convent's ſolitary Gloom!
There ſtern Religion quench'd th'unwilling Flame,
There died the beſt of Paſſions, Love and Fame.

Yet write, oh write me all, that I may join
Griefs to thy Griefs, and echo Sighs to thine.
Nor Foes nor Fortune take this Pow'r away;
And is my *Abelard* leſs kind than they?
Tears ſtill are mine, and thoſe I need not ſpare,
Love but demands what elſe were ſhed in Pray'r;

No

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No happier Task these faded Eyes pursue;
To read and weep is all they now can do.
Then share thy Pain, allow that sad Relief;
Ah, more than share it! give me all thy Grief.
Heav'n first taught Letters for some Wretch's Aid,
Some banish'd Lover, or some captive Maid;
They live, they speak, they breathe what Love inspires,
Warm from the Soul, and faithful to its Fires,
The Virgin's Wish without her Fears impart,
Excuse the Blush, and pour out all the Heart,
Speed the soft Intercourse from Soul to Soul,
And waft a Sigh from *Indus* to the *Pole*.
Thou know'st how guiltless first I met thy Flame,
When Love approach'd me under Friendship's Name;
My Fancy form'd thee of angelic Kind,
Some Emanation of th' all-beauteous Mind.
Those smiling Eyes, attemp'ring every Ray,
Shone sweetly lambent with celestial Day.
Guiltless I gaz'd; Heav'n listen'd while you sung;
And Truths divine came mended from that Tongue.
From Lips like those what Precept fail'd to move?
Too soon they taught me 'twas no Sin to love:
Back through the Paths of pleasing Sense I ran,
Nor wish'd an Angel whom I lov'd a Man.
Dim and remote the Joys of Saints I see;
Nor envy them that Heav'n I lose for thee.

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How oft', when preſt to Marriage, have I ſaid,
Curſe on all Laws but thoſe which Love has made?
Love, free as Air, at Sight of human Ties,
Spreads his light Wings, and in a Moment flies.
Let Wealth, let Honour, wait the wedded Dame,
Auguſt her Deed, and ſacred be her Fame;
Before true Paſſion all thoſe Views remove,
Fame, Wealth, and Honour! what are you to Love?
The jealous God, when we profane his Fires,
Thoſe reſtleſs Paſſions in Revenge inſpires,
And bids them make miſtaken Mortals groan,
Who ſeek in Love for ought but Love alone.
Should at my Feet the World's great Maſter fall,
Himſelf, his Throne, his World, I'd ſcorn 'em all:
Not *Cæſar*'s Empreſs would I deign to prove;
No, make me Miſtreſs to the Man I love;
If there be yet another Name, more free,
More fond than Miſtreſs, make me that to thee!
Oh happy State! when Souls each other draw,
When Love is Liberty, and Nature, Law,
All then is full, poſſeſſing, and poſſeſs'd,
No craving Void left aking in the Breaſt:
Ev'n Thought meets Thought, ere from the Lips it part,
And each warm Wiſh ſprings mutual from the Heart.
This ſure is Bliſs (if Bliſs on Earth there be)
And once the Lot of *Abelard* and me.

Alas

Alas how chang'd! what ſudden Horrors riſe?
A naked Lover bound and bleeding lies!
Where, where was *Eloïſe?* her Voice, her Hand,
Her Poniard, had oppos'd the dire Command.
Barbarian ſtay! that bloody Stroke reſtrain;
The Crime was common, common be the Pain.
I can no more; by Shame, by Rage ſuppreſs'd,
Let Tears, and burning Bluſhes ſpeak the reſt.

Canſt thou forget that ſad, that ſolemn Day,
When Victims at yon' Altar's Foot we lay?
Canſt thou forget what Tears that Moment fell,
When, warm in Youth, I bad the World farewell?
As with cold Lips I kiſs'd the ſacred Veil,
The Shrines all trembled, and the Lamps grew pale:
Heav'n ſcarce believ'd the Conqueſt it ſurvey'd,
And Saints with Wonder heard the Vows I made.
Yet then, to thoſe dread Altars as I drew,
Not on the Croſs my Eyes were fix'd, but you:
Not Grace, or Zeal, Love only was my Call,
And if I loſe thy Love, I loſe my all.
Come! with thy Looks, thy Words, relieve my Woe;
Thoſe ſtill at leaſt are left thee to beſtow.
Still on that Breaſt enamour'd let me lie,
Still drink delicious Poiſon from thy Eye,
Pant on thy Lip, and to thy Heart be preſs'd;
Give all thou canſt—and let me dream the reſt.
Ah no! inſtruct me other Joys to prize,
With other Beauties charm my partial Eyes,

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Full in my View ſet all the bright Abode,
And make my Soul quit *Abelard* for God.
Ah think at leaſt thy Flock deſerves thy Care,
Plants of thy Hand, and Children of thy Pray'r.
From the falſe World in early Youth they fled,
By thee to Mountains, Wilds, and Deſerts led.
You rais'd theſe hallow'd Walls; the Deſert ſmil'd,
And Paradiſe was open'd in the Wild.
No weeping Orphan ſaw his Father's Stores
Our Shrines irradiate, or emblaze the Floors;
No ſilver Saints, by dying Miſers given,
Here brib'd the Rage of ill-requited Heav'n:
But ſuch plain Roofs as Piety could raiſe,
And only vocal with the Maker's Praiſe.
In theſe lone Walls (their Day's eternal Bound)
Theſe moſs-grown Domes with ſpiry Turrets crown'd,
Where aweful Arches make a noon-day Night,
And the dim Windows ſhed a ſolemn Light;
Thy Eyes diffus'd a reconciling Ray,
And Gleams of Glory brighten'd all the Day.
But now no Face divine Contentment wears,
'Tis all blank Sadneſs, or continual Tears.
See now the Force of others' Pray'rs I try,
(Oh pious Fraud of am'rous Charity!)
But why ſhould I on others' Pray'rs depend?
Come thou, my Father, Brother, Huſband, Friend!
Ah

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Ah let thy Handmaid, Sister, Daughter move,
And, all those tender Names in one, thy Love!
The darksome Pines that o'er yon' Rocks reclin'd
Wave high, and murmur to the hollow Wind,
The wand'ring Streams that shine between the Hills,
The Grots that echo to the tinkling Rills,
The dying Gales that pant upon the Trees,
The Lakes that quiver to the curling Breeze;
No more these Scenes my Meditation aid,
Or lull to Rest the visionary Maid.
But o'er the twilight Groves, and dusky Caves,
Long-sounding Isles, and intermingled Graves,
Black Melancholy sits, and round her throws
A death-like Silence, and a dread Repose:
Her gloomy Presence saddens all the Scene,
Shades ev'ry Flow'r, and darkens ev'ry Green,
Deepens the Murmur of the falling Floods,
And breathes a browner Horror on the Woods.
Yet here for ever, ever must I stay;
Sad Proof how well a Lover can obey!
Death, only Death, can break the lasting Chain;
And here ev'n then, shall my cold Dust remain,
Here all its Frailties, all its Flames resign,
And wait, till 'tis no Sin to mix with thine.
Ah Wretch! believ'd the Spouse of God in vain,
Confess'd within the Slave of Love and Man.
Assist me Heav'n! but whence arose that Pray'r?
Sprung it from Piety, or from Despair?

Ev'n

Ev'n here, where frozen Chaſtity retires,
Love finds an Altar for forbidden Fires.
I ought to grieve, but cannot what I ought;
I mourn the Lover, not lament the Fault;
I view my Crime, but kindle at the View,
Repent old Pleaſures, and ſollicit new;
Now turn'd to Heav'n, I weep my paſt Offence,
Now think of thee, and curſe my Innocence.
Of all Affliction taught a Lover yet,
'Tis ſure the hardeſt Science, to forget!
How ſhall I loſe the Sin, yet keep the Senſe,
And love th' Offender, yet deteſt th' Offence?
How the dear Object from the Crime remove,
Or how diſtinguiſh Penitence from Love?
Unequal Taſk! a Paſſion to reſign,
For Hearts ſo touch'd, ſo pierc'd, ſo loſt as mine.
Ere ſuch a Soul regains its peaceful State,
How often muſt it love, how often hate!
How often hope, deſpair, reſent, regret,
Conceal, diſdain—do all Things but forget.
But let Heav'n ſeize it, all at once 'tis fir'd,
Not touch'd, but rapt; not waken'd, but inſpir'd!
Oh come! oh teach me Nature to ſubdue,
Renounce my Love, my Life, my ſelf—and you.
Fill my fond Heart with God alone, for he
Alone, can rival, can ſucceed to thee.

How happy is the blameleſs Veſtal's Lot?
The World forgetting, by the World forgot:

Eternal

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Eternal Sun-ſhine of the ſpotleſs Mind!
Each Pray'r accepted, and each Wiſh reſign'd;
Labour and Reſt, that equal Periods keep;
'Obedient Slumbers that can wake and weep;
Deſires compos'd, Affections ever even;
Tears that delight, and Sighs that waft to Heav'n.
Grace ſhines around her with ſereneſt Beams,
And whiſp'ring Angels prompt her golden Dreams.
For her the Spouſe prepares the bridal Ring,
For her white Virgins *Hymeneals* ſing,
For her th' unfading Roſe of *Eden* blooms,
And Wings of Seraphs ſhed divine Perfumes,
To Sounds of heav'nly Harps ſhe dies away,
And melts in Viſions of eternal Day.

Far other Dreams my erring Soul employ,
Far other Raptures, of unholy Joy:
When at the Cloſe of each ſad, ſorrowing Day,
Fancy reſtores what Vengeance ſnatch'd away,
Then Conſcience ſleeps, and leaving Nature free,
All my looſe Soul unbounded ſprings to thee.
O curſt, dear Horrors of all-conſcious Night!
How glowing Guilt exalts the keen Delight!
Provoking Dæmons all Reſtraint remove,
And ſtir within me ev'ry Source of Love.
I hear thee, view thee, gaze o'er all thy Charms,
And round thy Phantom glue my claſping Arms.
I wake:——no more I hear, no more I view,
The Phantom flies me, as unkind as you.

I call

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I call aloud; it hears not what I ſay;
I ſtretch my empty Arms; it glides away.
To dream once more I cloſe my willing Eyes;
Ye ſoft Illuſions, dear Deceits, ariſe!
Alas, no more!——methinks we wand'ring go
Thro' dreary Waſtes, and weep each other's Woe,
Where round ſome mould'ring Tow'r pale Ivy creeps,
And low-brow'd Rocks hang nodding o'er the Deeps.
Sudden you mount, you beckon from the Skies;
Clouds interpoſe, Waves roar, and Winds ariſe.
I ſhriek, ſtart up, the ſame ſad Proſpect find,
And wake to all the Griefs I left behind.
For thee the Fates, ſeverely kind, ordain
A cool Suſpenſe from Pleaſure and from Pain;
Thy Life a long, dead Calm of fix'd Repoſe;
No Pulſe that riots, and no Blood that glows,
Still as the Sea, ere Winds were taught to blow,
Or moving Spirit bade the Waters flow;
Soft as the Slumbers of a Saint forgiv'n,
And mild as opening Gleams of promis'd Heav'n.
Come *Abelard!* for what haſt thou to dread?
The Torch of *Venus* burns not for the Dead.
Nature ſtands check'd; Religion diſapproves;
Ev'n thou art cold——yet *Eloiſa* loves.
Ah hopeleſs, laſting Flames! like thoſe that burn
To light the Dead, and warm th' unfruitful Urn.

What

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What Scenes appear, where-e'er I turn my View,
The dear Ideas where I fly, purſue,
Riſe in the Grove, before the Altar riſe,
Stain all my Soul, and wanton in my Eyes.
I waſte the Matin Lamp in Sighs for thee,
Thy Image ſteals between my God and me,
Thy Voice I ſeem in ev'ry Hymn to hear,
With ev'ry Bead I drop too ſoft a Tear.
When from the Cenſer Clouds of Fragrance roll,
And ſwelling Organs lift the riſing Soul,
One Thought of thee puts all the Pomp to Flight,
Prieſts, Tapers, Temples, ſwim before my Sight:
In Seas of Flame my plunging Soul is drown'd,
While Altars blaze, and Angels tremble round.

While proſtrate here in humble Grief I lie,
Kind, virtuous Drops juſt gath'ring in my Eye,
While praying, trembling, in the Duſt I roll,
And dawning Grace is opening on my Soul:
Come, if thou dar'ſt, all charming as thou art!
Oppoſe thyſelf to Heav'n; diſpute my Heart;
Come, with one Glance of thoſe deluding Eyes
Blot out each bright Idea of the Skies;
Take back that Grace, thoſe Sorrows, and thoſe Tears;
Take back my fruitleſs Penitence and Pray'rs;
Snatch me, juſt mounting, from the bleſt Abode:
Aſſiſt the Fiends, and tear me from my God!

No,

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No, fly me, fly me! far as Pole from Pole;
Rise, *Alps* between us! and whole Oceans roll!
Ah, come not, write not, think not once of me,
Nor share one Pang of all I felt for thee.
Thy Oaths I quit, thy Memory resign;
Forget, renounce me, hate whate'er was mine.
Fair Eyes, and tempting Looks (which yet I view!)
Long liv'd, ador'd Ideas, all adieu!
O Grace serene! oh Virtue heav'nly fair!
Divine Oblivion of low-thoughted Care!
Fresh blooming Hope, gay Daughter of the Sky!
And Faith, our early Immortality!
Enter, each mild, each amicable Guest;
Receive, and wrap me in eternal Rest!

See in her Cell sad *Eloïsa* spread,
Propt on some Tomb, a Neighbour of the Dead!
In each low Wind methinks a Spirits calls,
And more than Echoes talk along the Walls.
Here, as I watch'd the dying Lamps around,
From yonder Shrine I heard a hollow Sound:
'Come, Sister, come! (it said, or seem'd to say)
'Thy Place is here, sad Sister, come away!
'Once like thyself, I trembled, wept, and pray'd,
'Love's Victim then, though now a sainted Maid:
'But all is calm in this eternal Sleep;
'Here Grief forgets to groan, and Love to weep,
'Ev'n Superstition loses ev'ry Fear:
'For God, not Man, absolves our Frailties here.'

I come,

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I come, I come! prepare your roſeate Bow'rs,
Celeſtial Palms, and ever-blooming Flow'rs.
Thither, where Sinners may have Reſt, I go,
Where Flames refin'd in Breaſts ſeraphic glow:
Thou, *Abelard!* the laſt ſad Office pay,
And ſmooth my Paſſage to the Realms of Day;
See my Lips tremble, and my Eye-balls roll,
Suck my laſt Breath, and catch the flying-Soul!
Ah no—— in ſacred Veſtments may'ſt thou ſtand,
The hallow'd Taper trembling in thy Hand,
Preſent the Croſs before my lifted Eye,
Teach me at once, and learn of me to die.
Ah then, thy once lov'd *Eloïſa* ſee!
It will be then no Crime to gaze on me.
See from my Cheek the tranſient Roſes fly!
See the laſt Sparkle languiſh in my Eye!
'Till ev'ry Motion, Pulſe, and Breath be o'er;
And ev'n my *Abelard* be lov'd no more.
O Death all-eloquent! you only prove
What Duſt we doat on, when 'tis Man we love.
Then too, when Fate ſhall thy fair Frame deſtroy,
(That Cauſe of all my Guilt, and all my Joy)
In Trance extatic may thy Pangs be drown'd,
Bright Clouds deſcend, and Angels watch thee round,
From opening Skies may ſtreaming Glories ſhine,
And Saints embrace thee with a Love like mine.

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May one kind Grave unite each hapleſs Name,
And graft my Love immortal on thy Fame!
Then, Ages hence, when all my Woes are o'er,
When this rebellious Heart ſhall beat no more;
If ever Chance two wand'ring Lovers brings
To *Paraclete*'s white Walls and ſilver Springs,
O'er the pale Marble ſhall they join their Heads,
And drink the falling Tears each other ſheds;
Then ſadly ſay with mutual Pity mov'd,
"Oh may we never love as theſe have lov'd!
From the full Choir when loud *Hoſannas* riſe,
And ſwell the Pomp of dreadful Sacrifice,
Amid that Scene, if ſome relenting Eye
Glance on the Stone where our cold Relicks lie,
Devotion's ſelf ſhall ſteal a Thought from Heav'n,
One human Tear ſhall drop, and be forgiv'n.
And ſure if Fate ſome future Bard ſhall join
In ſad Similitude of G[illegible] to mine,
Condemn'd whole Years in Abſence to deplore,
And image Charms he muſt behold no more;
Such if there be, who loves ſo long, ſo well;
Let him our ſad, our tender Story tell;
The well-ſung Woes will ſooth my penſive Ghoſt;
He beſt can paint 'em, who ſhall feel 'em moſt.

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